A Military History of the Mediterranean Sea

History of Warfare

Editors

Kelly DeVries (*Loyola University Maryland*)
John France (*University of Wales, Swansea*)
Michael S. Neiberg (*United States Army War College, Pennsylvania*)
Frederick Schneid (*High Point University, North Carolina*)

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A Military History of the Mediterranean Sea

Aspects of War, Diplomacy, and Military Elites

Edited by

Georgios Theotokis
Aysel Yıldız

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Cover illustration: Map of Nicosia, Cyprus, during its siege by the Ottomans (1570) – CAMOCIO, Giovanni Francesco. Isole famose porti, fortezze, e terre maritime sottoposte alla Ser.ma Sig.ria di Venetia, ad altri Principi Christiani, et al Sig.or Turco, novamente poste in luce, Venice, alla libraria del segno di S.Marco, [ca. 1574]. (http://eng.travelogues.gr/item.php?view=45646) Courtesy of Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation.

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Notes on Contributors

Stephen Bennett
is a PhD candidate working under Tom Asbridge at Queen Mary University of London on North West European participation in the Third Crusade. He is a graduate of Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and was made Diplomado de Estado Mayor by the Spanish Command and Staff College in 2004. His most recent publication was, 'The Battle of Arsuf/Arsur, A Reappraisal of the Charge of the Hospitallers', *The Military Orders: Culture and Conflict in the Mediterranean World, Volume 6.1*, ed. J. Schenk and M. Carr (Abingdon, 2017), pp. 44-53.

Stathis Birtachas
received his PhD from the History Department of the Ionian University (Corfu) with a thesis entitled 'Paolo Sarpi and the Greek Orthodox Subjects of the Venetian Republic between Venice and Rome'. He is author of *Society, Culture and Government in the Venetian Maritime State: The case of Cyprus* (Thessaloniki: Vanias, 2011). He is currently Assistant Professor at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, where he teaches courses in the History of Italy and of the Venetian Dominion in the eastern Mediterranean.

Cornel Bontea
is a PhD candidate at the University of Montréal. His main area of expertise is the history of the crusades, more specifically the crusades after the fall of Acre (1291). His PhD research focuses on the period between the loss of the Holy Land (1291) and the Nicopolis campaign (1396). It examines the strategies and tactics of the Western propagandists in the fourteenth century in their effort to continue the crusading movement in the eastern Mediterranean and the Holy Land and it offers a unique perspective on the understanding of the crusading theory and the actual campaigns of the fourteenth century.

Wayne H. Bowen
is Professor of History and Director of Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Central Florida. Bowen's five books on Spanish history focus on major conflicts, from the wars against the Ottomans to Spain during the American Civil War and World War II. His secondary area is the Middle East, with three books and several articles on Saudi Arabia and the Ottoman Empire. Bowen's current research is on the Protestant Reformation in the Spanish Habsburg Empire and a comparative history of the late Spanish and Ottoman Empires. He received his MA and PhD in History from Northwestern University.

Lilia Campana
is an Instructional Assistant Professor in the Department of Visualization, Texas A&M University. She completed her MA (2010), PhD (2014), and Post-doctoral tenure (2015) at the Nautical Archaeology Program, Texas A&M University. She is currently the recipient of the American Institute of Archeology (A.I.A.) Richard J. Steffy Fellowship in Nautical Archaeology and Ship Design. Her primary research interests and fields of expertise include nautical archaeology and seafaring of the Mediterranean; shipbuilding technology; ship design and naval architecture; maritime history from the Classical period to the Early Modern period; military and naval history of Europe; and shipbuilding manuscripts and naval treatises.

Papadamou Chrysovalantis
is a PhD candidate in History, Department of History and Archaeology, University of Cyprus. He is a research assistant in the Department of History. Is specializing in the Venetian history of Cyprus and for the Cypriot in Venice at the 16th-17th century. The title of his thesis is Cypriot in Venice after the venetian-ottoman war in Cyprus (1570/71). For three years he was research-scholar at the Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice.

Raffaele D'Amato
currently affiliated with Ferrara University, Laboratory of the Danubian provinces of the Roman Empire, in Italy, is a historian and experienced archaeologist specializing in material culture of Rome and Byzantium, especially on the field of military matters. He is the author of numerous articles and monographs on the material culture of Byzantium. He has taught at Fatih University in Istanbul and earned a research grant from *TUBITAK* (*Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey*) for the research project: "Traces of Byzantium's Army: from Constantinople to Pontus".

Elina Gugliuzzo
is a researcher and teaches Early Modern History at the University Pegaso (Naples, Italy). She is member of the European Society of Environmental History and of the European Association for Urban History. Recent publications: *Economic and Social Systems in the Early Modern Age Seaports: Malta, Messina, Barcelona, and Ottoman Maritime Policy*, The Edwin Mellen Press, U.S.A., 2015; *La piaga delle locuste. Ambiente e società nel Mediterraneo d'età moderna*, Naples, 2014; *Building A Sense Of Belonging: the Foundation of Valletta in Malta*, in M. Delbeke – M. Schraven (eds.), *Foundation, Dedication and Consecration in Early Modern Europe*, Brill, Leiden 2011; *Etre esclave à Malte à*

l'époque moderne, in *Captifs et captivitée en Méditerranée à l'époque moderne*, "Cahiers de la Méditerranée", n. 87, 2013.

Nikolaos S. Kanellopoulos
holds a PhD (with distinction) in the field of Byzantine military history, an MSc in History and Philosophy of Sciences and Technology and an MSc in Guided Weapon Systems. He is a scientific specialist on Military History with the Hellenic Army Academy. He has presented and published various papers on late Byzantine military history, medieval warfare and the Greek War of Independence. His research interests include issues of Western-Byzantine interaction on the military field, military tactics and armament, ethics of war and peace in the medieval context as well as the military confrontations during the Greek War of Independence.

Savvas Kyriakidis
is a research associate at the University of Johannesburg and a research fellow at the Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (Koç University). He received his PhD from the University of Birmingham. He has been a research fellow at New Europe College in Bucharest and a postdoctoral fellow at Princeton University. He has taught Byzantine history at the Open University of Cyprus and at Sabancı University. His research focuses on the military history of the Byzantine empire. His main publication is, *Warfare in Late Byzantium, 1204-1453* (Brill: Leiden 2011).

Tilemachos Lounghis
earned his PhD from the Sorbonne University (1972). For many years he was the head of the research sector at the *Institute of Byzantine Research* in Athens, and he has written many books in several languages (English, French, German, Greek), over 130 papers in academic journals (in the above languages and in Russian), various popular articles on Byzantium and the Medieval History of Europe. Following his retirement in 2012, he remains active academically, dealing with a Byzantine History information repository at the Institute of Byzantine Research, while he is the general editor of a multi-volume collection of essays entitled *Byzantium – History and Civilization*.

Alan Murray
studied Ancient, Medieval and Modern History and German Language and Literature at the University of St Andrews. After completing his MA, he taught English at the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg. He returned to St Andrews to undertake research and wrote his doctoral thesis on the origins of the nobility

of the kingdom of Jerusalem, 1099-1131. He joined the *International Medieval Bibliography* at Leeds in 1988. He has since become Editorial Director of the project and Senior Lecturer in Medieval Studies at Leeds University. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a regular member of the *Baltische Historische Kommission*. He also belongs to the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, the Oswald von Wolkenstein-Gesellschaft and the Scottish Place-Names Society.

Jacopo Pessina
is a PhD candidate in Early Modern History at the University of Pisa. He is interested in the fifteenth- and the sixteenth-century military history, with special reference to the military history of the republics of Lucca and Siena, and the relationship between war and the state.

Philip Rance
studied History and Classics at the University of St Andrews, where he was awarded his PhD for a thesis on Late Roman military literature. He has taught ancient and medieval history and Greek language and literature at universities in the United Kingdom and Germany, and held senior research fellowships at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, Koç University Istanbul, Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel and Freie Universität Berlin, where he is a Research Associate. He has published widely on Late Roman and Byzantine warfare and military culture, and Greek, Roman and Byzantine military literature, its manuscript tradition and reception.

Georgios Theotokis
PhD History (2010, University of Glasgow), is historian specialising in the military history of eastern Mediterranean in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. He has published numerous articles and monographs on the history of conflict and warfare in Europe and the Mediterranean in the Medieval and early Modern periods. His first monograph was on the *Norman Campaigns in the Balkans 1081-1108* (2014), while his second book on the *Byzantine Military Tactics in Syria in the 10th century* will be out in the summer of 2018. He has taught in Turkish and Greek Universities; he is currently teaching at the University of Athens.

Iason-Eleftherios Tzouriadis
recently completed his thesis (2016) at Leeds University, titled "The Typology and Use of Staff Weapons in Western Europe c.1400 -1550". He specializes in the study of late medieval and early modern arms and armour, representation of

combat and violence, matters of typology and research, and aspects of historical European martial arts. Other research interests include symbolism in art, soldier imagery, and the history of Islay distilleries.

Ian Wilson
is a PhD student at Royal Holloway, University of London. His thesis focuses on the treatment of the vanquished in Outremer under the supervision of Professor Jonathan Phillips. Ian had formally studied Ancient and Medieval History at the University of Sheffield before entering a career in the City of London. Finally returning to his first love of history, he obtained an MA in Crusader Studies. His wider interests include warrior mentalities, concepts of masculinity, perceptions of cowardice and the impact of culture on war.

Aysel Yıldız
PhD History (2008, Sabancı University). Specialization in late Ottoman history and palaeography, with a special focus on political and military history and social movements. She is the editor of the book titled *Asiler ve Gaziler: Kabakçı Mustafa Risales*i (2007) and the author of *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire: The Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolution* (2017). She is also the co-editor of *War and Conflict in the Mediterrenean: A Collection of Papers*, with Raffaele D'Amato, Abdülmennan Altıntaş and Georgios Theotokis (2017) .

Introduction: War, Warfare, and the Mediterranean Military History

Military history is a branch of history that focuses on the core element of war, the battle itself – on military tactics, strategies, armament and the conduct of military operations – what we may call 'battle narratives'. But within the last two generations, military history has grown up to be much more than a look into the 'art' or 'science' of war. According to the eminent military historian Stephen Morillo

> A broad definition of military history ... includes an historical study in which military personnel of all sorts, warfare (the way in which conflicts are actually fought on land, sea, and in the air), military institutions, and their various intersections with politics, economics, society, nature, and culture form the focus or topic of the work.[1]

Thus, a military historian should focus on three main contexts: (a) the political-institutional context that covers the relation between the political and the military institutions within a state and to what degree an army could be used as an instrument of politics; (b) the socio-economic context, an area that includes the impact of war on societies (economic productivity, logistics, recruitment, technology etc.) and that of societies on war, and (c) the cultural context that shows the interaction of warrior values with the cultural values of societies in general (glorification or condemnation of warrior values through epic poems, folk songs and tales etc.).[2]

The present volume focuses on the military history of a specific region and period – the post-Roman Mediterranean military history until the early modern period. The Mediterranean has attracted the imagination of modern historians as the epicentre of great political entities like the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Ottomans, Venetians, and the Spanish and so on. However, it seems that the Sea was always on the margins of historical inquiry between monographs on the histories of Europe, the Middle-East (itself a very outdated

1 Morillo, S., *What is Military History?*, Cambridge 2013, p. 4.

2 Morillo, S., Black, J., Lococo, P., *War in World History, Society, Technology and War from Ancient Times to the Present*, (2 vols.) New York 2009, vol. I, p. x. See also the collection of essays: *Transcultural Wars: from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century*, ed. by Hans-Henning Kortüm, Berlin 2006, especially part II.

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term) and North Africa. That was until the publication of the famous 2-volume work by F. Braudel in 1949 (first publication) that profoundly shaped the way of understanding of how societies living around the Mediterranean interacted in a single period of history, offering what another great historian has coined it "a horizontal history of the Mediterranean."[3] This volume aims to offer a rather vertical history of war in the Mediterranean from the early Middle Ages to the early Modern period, putting the emphasis on the changing face of several of war's aspects and contexts over time.

As Braudel points to the introduction of his seventh chapter of the *Mediterranean*:

> I cannot allow myself to neglect the history of warfare [of this region], a powerful and persistent undercurrent of human life. During the fifty years with which we are concerned [1550-1600], war punctuated the year with its rhythms, opening and closing gates of time. Even when the fighting was over, it exerted a hidden pressure, surviving underground.[4]

Yet, despite the profound impact of war on the lives of people living around the Mediterranean Sea, he is the only one to have devoted a part of his sizeable monograph to war, its evolution and impact on the Mediterranean societies. Alas, it is clear the *Mediterranean*'s real strength lay in Braudel's understanding of the landscape of the Mediterranean, and of important characteristics of the Mediterranean Sea itself – its winds and currents – what we may call the 'ecologizing approach' to history – that shaped what was happening within its boundaries.

Subsequently, Horden and Purcell, in their pioneering work about the agrarian history of the lands bordering the Mediterranean, a work which assumes that a history of the Mediterranean should include land bordering the sea at a significant depth, highlighted two principal ways to explain the Mediterranean unity: the – already mentioned – 'ecologizing approach' that focuses on the common physical and climatic characteristics of the Sea and its surrounding hinterlands, and the 'interactionist approach' that bases its arguments on the ease of communications.[5]

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3 D. Abulafia, *The Great Sea, A Human History of the Mediterranean*, Oxford 2011, p. xxvi.

4 Braudel, *Mediterranean*, II, p. 836.

5 P. Horden, N. Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea, A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford 2000, p. 10. For a critique on Horden's and Purcell's book: *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, ed. W.V. Harris (Oxford, 2005), pp. 3-20.

The former describes the basis of the European economy and diet grounded on the cultivation of *vitis vinifera* and *olea europea*, the vines and olive-trees that had provided the region with its unity and distinctiveness for millennia. The climate of the region, with its hot and dry summers and mild rainy winters is another famous feature, which can be supplemented by the effect of the climate on the sea and navigation, the recurring patterns of the Mediterranean coastlands with its physical peculiarities, and its distinctive vegetation.[6] The contrast with the Continental world of dense hardwood, heavy and wet land, colder winters and milder and wet summers and an economy dominated by serial production cannot be more pronounced.[7]

The latter approach is, rather, self-explanatory and assumes that, what historians call the 'Mediterranean unity,' came as a result of the centrality of the Sea to communications. Travelling by sea from West to East and from the North to the South, despite the obvious dangers of sea-travelling that even bewilder modern travellers, was infinitely easier, safer and – more importantly – faster than land travel. Civilizations like the Greek, Egyptian, Phoenician and the Roman turned their proximity to the Sea into an essential condition for their economic and political expansion, being in close contact with the Mesopotamian civilizations and their ancient trade routes to Asia. Medieval civilizations like the Byzantine (Eastern Roman), Arab, Venetian, Ottoman and the Spanish tried to emulate their ancient counterparts with varying degrees of success; it is noteworthy that Rome was the last superpower to fully dominate the entire Mediterranean Sea and Justinian's wars of 'Reconquest' fully comply to the dictates of the Roman imperial ideology of dominance over the oikoumene (the known world).

> The sea is everything it is said to be: it provides unity, transport, the means of exchange and intercourse, if man is prepared to make an effort and pay a price. But it has also been the great divider, the obstacle that had to be overcome.[8]

Following Braudel's comments on the difficulties that navigators had to tackle during their travels in the Mediterranean, John Pryor has laid the emphasis on the limitations posed by the winds and currents prevalent in the Sea which, in combination with the limits in naval technology, profoundly affected the history of the region. In his enormously valuable study that was first published in

6 Horden, Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, pp. 12-14.

7 C.R. Backman, *The Worlds of Medieval Europe* (Oxford 2003), pp. 7-10.

8 Braudel, *Mediterranean*, I, p. 276.

1988, John Pryor convincingly argued that the direction of prevailing winds from the West to East, the dangers of summer breezes blowing from the coastal mountains, summer storms and sea currents moving clockwise, these are just some of the natural phenomena that can make sea-travel in the Mediterranean Sea highly unpredictable.[9]

Ships of all sizes and shapes were also vulnerable to geographical conditions because their range and sailing capacity were severely affected by technological limitations. Until the sixteenth century and the development of the carrack and the Iberian galleon, galleys were simply not designed for long travels in open waters and against the prevailing winds; they rather had to navigate based on coastal observation, thus having to follow specific coastal routes. Indeed, naval strategy dictated the establishment and defence of naval ports used as bases that would allow a state to protect its trade-routes and project its economic power and military force.[10] Ultimately, the only way to control the seas was to control strategic points in its periphery. In fact, the best way for a modern historian to grasp the strategic significance for the empires of the Mediterranean of these trading posts and military bases in the coasts and islands of the Aegean, Ionian, Adriatic, Tyrrhenian Seas and the coasts of southern Anatolia is to superimpose a map showing the trade routes in the Mediterranean with one showing the sites of major naval conflicts; they are a match.[11]

Keeping all these general definitions and questions in mind, the present volume focuses on a specific region and period – the post-Roman Mediterranean until the early Modern period. Our purpose should not be considered to be an attempt to minimize the importance of the Roman Empire, but rather to reconsider the changing face of warfare in the Mediterranean in the aforementioned period. In fact, the legacy of Rome was still one of the most unifying elements that connected the historical traditions of the Byzantine, Islamic and Western European worlds.[12]

The basic characteristic of post-Roman Mediterranean is the shattering of the political unity of the Mediterranean basin which had been established under the rule of Octavian. Despite the continuing Roman legacy in the back-

9 Pryor, J. H., *Geography, Technology, and War, studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean, 649-1571* (Cambridge, 2000). A shorter version of Pryor's conclusions can be found in: "The Geographical Conditions of Galley Navigation in the Mediterranean," in *The Age of the Galley, Mediterranean Oared Vessels since Pre-Classical Times*, ed. by R. Gardiner (London 1995), pp. 206-16.

10 Morillo, Black, Lococo, *War in World History*, vol. 1, chapters 5, 10 and 15.

11 See the map in: Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p. 104.

12 Morillo, 1, p. 139.

ground, some new elements entered into the already complicated Mediterranean scene after the collapse of the Roman Empire. The pastoral nomads and institutionalization of Christianity as well as the rise of Islam offered new challenges. During the disintegration of the Roman Empire, the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean gradually detached from each other.[13] During the Middle Ages, with the migrations of the central Asian pastoral nomads, the Mediterranean world has been introduced to the nomadic warfare. As pastoral nomads and horse archers, their encounters with the Byzantines, Persians and the Crusaders were different in terms of weaponry and battle tactics. The interactions between these different worlds always made the societies and states more ready to adopt, evolve as well as import new strategy and technology, producing in the end hybrid institutions and tactics.

As warfare was an integral part of the period under study, Dominique Valérian comments that during the Middle Ages, the Mediterranean became a frontier between 'Islam, Greek and Latin Christendom, although no power was hegemonic.'[14] Indeed, wars of the period were to some extent 'confessional struggles', especially between Islam and Christianity, best manifested in the 'holy coalition' wars like the Crusades. Thus, spiritual aspects of warfare became more pronounced. Yet it is misleading to think that there was a sharp line between material and spiritual rewards in the parties involved in holy wars.[15] Plunder and booty were as important as well.[16]

During the Medieval and early Modern period, the region hosted powerful centralized bureaucratic empires, with the bulk of their income coming from an agrarian-based economy. Trans-Mediterranean international trade allowed these polities to keep standing armies and fleets. Thus, the degree of these empires ability to control the trade became an integral part of their strategies and policies, aggressive or defensive – depending on the conjunctures. Sea and the land that surrounds it are interrelated in this geography.

City-states, states and empires were not the sole historical actors in the Mediterranean basin: human elements in warfare form a crucial part of the military history of the region. For Rhoads Murphey, it was the human elements together with the natural conditions constituted two unpredictable variables of warfare[17] (also underlined by Murray and Kyriakidis in this volume). Human

13 Abulafia, *The Great Sea*, pp. 234-38.

14 D. Valérian, "The Medieval Mediterranean", Peregrine Horden and Sharen Kinoshito (eds.), *A Companion to Mediterranean History*, p. 86.

15 Abulafia, *The Great Sea*, p. 279.

16 Abulafia, *The Great Sea*, p. 279.

17 Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700*, New Brunswick, New Jersey 1999, pp. xviii, 167-175.

elements may include the slaves, war captives, spies, tradesmen, and pilgrims. Both professional and non-professional groups were employed by these states and as military elites were much more influential in organization, provisioning and formulating strategies, they appear in the field as active commanders, strategists, theoreticians, and administrators.

The mixed human elements, devoid of ethnic and religious differences, also strongly suggest the common aspects of the Mediterranean that support the notion of the 'Mediterranean unity'. The mercenary troops could be recruited from different ethnic groups such as (*stradiots and cappelletti* mounted troops, Catalans) in the service of various states from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Even the ordinary soldiery and officer ranks of the janissary army of the Ottomans, until the mid-seventeenth century, came from the non-Muslim Ottoman populations. Mercenary troops in the service of the Venetians introduced into Italy and the West a mixture of Byzantine, Slav, Albanian, and Ottoman unorthodox tactics and methods of light cavalry warfare. (See the focus of Birtachas' paper). Provincial human elements were also important part of the period, as exemplified by the urban militia forces in Luca, Pavia or the Papal state, where commandership belonged to the local elites of these city-states but still provided a chance for social mobility to the lower classes seeking some sort of privileges – tax exemption or representation in the council meetings. (See Jacoppo Pessina's paper).

The Focus and Scope of the Present Volume

The present volume hopes to place war within the political, socio-economic and cultural contexts mentioned at the beginning of this introduction. It aims to examine the mutual influence and interaction of war with societies and to study the effects of war on societies in general by bringing the cultural analysis of wars and warriors to the front stage. It is planned thematically in order to pinpoint different aspects of the Mediterranean military history over time.

Part 1 of the present volume focuses on naval warfare in the centuries that followed the fall of the Western Roman Empire and up to the Fourth Crusade. This was dominated by two main categories of navies with two rather distinct strategies:[18] first there was the centrally organized, funded and – logistically – maintained navies that had as their strategic task to defend the state's outposts and commercial activity in a role described as the 'policeman' of the seas. It is

18 An excellent analysis can be found in: Morillo, Black, Lococo, *War in World History*, vol. 1, pp. 177-8.

apparent that these fleets would have been the most technologically advanced of the age and their tactical aim would have been to sink enemy ships; the Byzantine dominates this category. In sharp contrast to that we have the navies of predatory nations like the Vikings consisting of fleets that are generated out of the socio-economic circumstances of the times, having no official state control or support and their tactical aim was to capture enemy ships, with raiding being their main strategic goal. The navies of the Arabs and Italian city-states, dominated by merchant oligarchies, were hybrid of these two categories, as economic reasons dictated the capture – rather than destruction – of enemy shipping. It is only after the thirteenth century and with the continuing growth of commercial networks and output that the technology and strategic goals of merchant and war fleets changed to a more aggressive and centrally organized and directed naval activity, as the examples of the Venetians, the Ottomans and the Portuguese amply demonstrate.

In his article "The Byzantine War Navy and the West, fifth to twelfth centuries," Tilemachos Lounghis insists on the three successive administrative reforms operated on the Byzantine naval forces which achieved to adapt various units and tactics (offensive and defensive) to necessities emerging each time; he does not deal at all with the 'technical' weaponry of Byzantine naval warfare (e g. the so-called Greek Fire, something tiresome in every aspect), but mainly with the composition and tasks of the naval squadrons throughout the centuries, down to 1204. The author tries to define the meaning of the 'Byzantine Southern Front' that is a straight line from the Southern coast of Anatolia to Sicily through Crete during the so-called 'Dark Centuries' and puts forward the view that a purely and officially Constantinopolitan fleet did not exist at all prior to the accession of the Macedonian Dynasty (867). This institution accompanied by some local 'appendixes', and not any more the former squadrons such as the former *Kibyrrhaeotae* and Sicily, was to last to the 4th Crusade. The difference between the Constantinopolitan fleet under the Macedonians and that under the Comnenian emperors consisted in the possibility to set sail to the West.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the maritime power of the Republic of Venice was seriously threatened by the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I (r. 1520-1566) in the East, and by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (r. 1519-1556) in the West. In order to regain its naval power in the Mediterranean, the Republic of Venice strongly encouraged Venetian shipwrights to submit new designs for war galleys. The undisputed founder and champion of this naval program was not a skilled shipwright but a professor of Greek language and literature named Vettor Fausto (1490-1546). In 1529, Fausto built a *quinqueremis* (quinquereme) whose design, he claimed, was based upon the *quinqueremis*

"used by the Romans during their wars" and that he had derived the shipbuilding proportions "from the most ancient Greek manuscripts." Lilia Campana's study, The Defence of the Venetian *dominio da mar* in the Sixteenth Century: Ship Design, Naval Architecture, and the Naval Career of Vettor Fausto's *Quinquereme*," examines unpublished archival documents in order to illuminate the technical features and the naval career of Fausto's quinquereme. With the eastern Mediterranean passing to the control of the Ottomans in the early sixteenth century, an issue that has captured the attention of historians is the incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the Mediterranean world. Eurocentric and Orientalist scholars had introduced the idea of an East-West technological and cultural divergence that supposedly occurred around the mid-fifteenth century. In the same period, the growing menace to the Christian states by way of the new naval power of the Ottoman Empire overshadows all other conflicts. This has been presented as a collision between two religions but it was a conflict between an expanding political entity and others whose powers were declining, and a conflict with an important economic element. The Ottoman Empire has consistently been regarded as a place apart, inextricably divided from the West by differences in culture and religion. A perception of its militarism, its tyranny, and its pervasive exoticism has led historians to measure the Ottoman world against a western standard and find it lacking.

Elina Gugliuzzo addresses this problem in her study of the Mediterranean 'imperial history' and argues that without inclusion of the Ottoman Empire it would be impossible to study it appropriately. The aim of Elina Gugliuzzo's 'Sea Power in the early age Mediterranean' is to undermine this enduring realm and to show how the Ottoman Empire was actually a fundamental part of the Mediterranean world offering an efficient Navy, recreating and extending the imperial heritage of Byzantium, allowing for considerable cultural and religious diversity, and promoting trade and reform projects.

With the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the East and Spain in the West, both powers extended their conquests to sea, coming into conflict with each other over North Africa, Italy, and Mediterranean islands. While the cataclysmic 1571 naval battle at Lepanto is well-known, war and stalemate in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries turned to treaties and collaboration in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Wayne Bowen's 'Conflict and Collaboration: The Spanish and Ottoman Empires in the Mediterranean, 1453-1923' argues that, not only were there striking similarities in the trajectories of Ottoman and Spanish navies, but also active efforts by both states to foster cooperation with the other, as a potential factor mitigating against the dominance of France, Britain, Russia and Austria. Naval, diplomatic and economic cooperation between Spain and the Ottoman Empire did not succeed in this objective, but its

development provides perspective on the relative autonomy of these minor powers in the Mediterranean during these centuries. Most historiography on these two empires focused either on the Hapsburg-Ottoman struggle for supremacy at sea and on land. After Lepanto, however, the stories of the Spanish and the Turks diverge in historical writing. Spain's story revolves around the Atlantic World, while the Ottomans appear most frequently in the Balkans, and later in wars against Russia and Austria. The contribution of this paper is to bring the Spanish and Ottoman Empires into the same historical narrative, as parallel states and dynasties forging a tenuous bond across the Mediterranean with former enemies.

Part 2 deals with the issue of visual art and artistic representation of weaponry as historical evidence taken from Byzantine and post-Byzantine art. It has often been pointed out that Byzantine art has been stylised and conventional and highly infused with Classical models.[19] This approach has often led historians to dismiss representations of equipment in Byzantine art as unrealistic and full of archaic and obsolete elements.[20] And even when these representations were, indeed, depicting the reality of their period, then one has to tackle another problem, namely whether these figures were girded in field armour or ceremonial armour.[21] Raffaele D'Amato will present and evaluate the unique speciments of frescoes representing scenes from the childhood and life of Jesus Christ that were discovered in the Coptic Christian village of Deir Abou Hennis at the beginning of the twentieth century, in an attempt to reconstruct and better understand the military lifestyle and material culture in Late-Antique Roman Egypt. D'Amato argues that the figures in the Deir Abou Hennis frescoes, rather than being the conventional depictions of the impressions of the painters that were bound by certain artistic stereotypes, they were accurate and realistic representations of military men in full costume and gear and they present a milestone in the military iconography of the Late-Antique soldier in Egypt shortly before the Arab expansion in the region.

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19 K. Weitzmann, "The Classical Mode in the Period of the Macedonian Emperors: Continuity or Revival?," in S. Vryonis (ed.) *The 'Past' in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture*, pp. 71-85.

20 Compare the views of M. Parani and R. D'Amato: Parani, M.G., *Reconstructing the Reality of Images, Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography* (*11th-15th Centuries*), *Leiden 2003*, p. 143; R.D' Amato, "The Betrayal: military iconography and archaeology in the Byzantine paintings of XI-XV centuries AD representing the arrest of Our Lord", in *Acts of the International Conference 'Weapons Bring Peace? Warfare in Medieval and Early Modern Europe'*, Wroclaw 2-4 December 2010, pp. 69-95.

21 D. Nicolle, "*Byzantine and Islamic Arms and Armour*; *Evidence for Mutual Influence*", *Graeco-Arabica* 4 (1991), 299-301.

Georgios Theotokis traces the history of a, rather unusual, weapon that could have been found in the arsenal of a Byzantine soldier before the tenth century. Although the lasso had gained its notoriety thanks to a popular fourth century description of a Goth warrior by Ammianus Marcellinus, its use by nomadic and sedentary populations is going back for several millennia and its geographical spread can be traced from the Black Sea and the Urals to Transoxania and China. The problem is, however, that very little has been mentioned thus far in contemporary bibliography about its place and value in the Eastern Roman armies and their panoply. In his '*Σῶκος*: an unusual Byzantine weapon,' Theotokis scrutinizes a variety of sources ranging from military treatises and histories, epic poems from the Byzantine, Iranian and Turkish folklore tradition, manuscript miniatures, and mosaic and fresco representations, in an attempt to track down the origin and evolution of the lasso in the eastern Mediterranean and its use by or against Byzantine soldiers from the fifth to the thirteenth centuries. The author clearly demonstrates that the last effective mentioning of the use of a lasso by Byzantine soldiers comes with Leo VI's *Taktika* (early tenth century) and attempts to give an answer why this weapon is not mentioned as a necessary apparel of an Imperial cavalryman in the period that followed the Byzantine expansion of the tenth century.

For centuries the Venetian Empire and its dominions of Corfu and Crete had been the cultural bridge between the East and the West, places where the humanities no doubt flourished to such an extent that changed the face of European civilization forever. Iason Tzouriadis' "Post-Byzantine Art and Western Influences in Military Iconography: The Case of Staff Weapons in the Work of Michael Damaskenos" explores the western influences on the military equipment – staff weapons in particular – that is depicted in the works of Michael Damaskenos. He is a sixteenth century artist and a major representative of the Cretan School of post-Byzantine painting that laid the foundation for the fusion of the conservative Byzantine artistic forms with Western stylistic elements. Tzouriadis' paper focuses on the, rather unusual for the Byzantine standards of painting, depiction of staff weapons – and especially the halberd – that constitute a unique and complicated area of iconographical research. Through the examination of a number of Damascenos' paintings, the author considers how the artist's personal experiences and personal journeys affected the type of weapons he chose to paint throughout his career in Crete, Corfu and Venice, and offers some fresh perspectives on how to approach post-byzantine art when investigating western influences in works that depict arms and armour.

Part 3 shifts the set and scope of our attention to the strategy of the Crusades movement. The Crusades were unique enterprises, not only in terms

of ideology and politics, but also regarding the manner in which they were organized and funded and the magnitude of the undertaking and its appeal in the hearts of Christian Europeans. As R.C. Smail pointed out in his monumental work on Crusader warfare:

> In Syria the Franks encountered military problems, both strategic and tactical, which imposed caution and restraint... Conquests and settlement involved domination of the land and its inhabitants, and to be continuously effective such domination needed to be based on castles and walled towns. The acquisition or successful defence of strong places was the highest prize of warfare, beside which success in battle was of secondary importance.[22]

Since the Latins in the Levant could not possibly have held any aspirations of complete dominance over Syria and Egypt, it is obvious that their principal strategic objective in the region was land, as it was land that formed the basis for the administrative and military function of the Crusader Principalities. Thus, regional strategies would involve campaigns of expansion in a disputed area and the safeguarding of communications between the Mediterranean ports in the region and the Latin inland posts and cities.

Effective control of land lay in the possession of fortified towns and castles, and successful resistance to invasion meant the preservation of the strong places even if the invading army was ravaging the surrounding countryside that fed the local population. But no town or castle could resist a besieging force indefinitely without a relieving army expected to secure the area and help the besieged. However, securing the area did not necessarily imply the taking of the field against the invaders but rather the continuous harassment of its units so that it is forced to withdraw due to logistical constraints.

As any battle carries the risk of defeat, and with the military manuals of the previous centuries (including Vegetius) strictly forbidding the recourse to it unless it is the last option, the Latins in the Levant were facing an additional disadvantage – lack of numbers and the immense difficulty in keeping up with new recruits from Europe. Any defeat could be potentially disastrous for a state but in the East, where the Latins were a thorn in a hostile environment. As the aftermath of Hattin in 1187 amply demonstrates, a victory in the field could only mean the beginning of a systematic attack on enemy walled cities and fortresses, which highlights once more their strategic significance to the region of the Middle-East.

22 R.C. Smail, *Crusader Warfare 1097-1193*, Cambridge 1995, p. 138.

The four articles that make up this section on strategy and command tackle several debates in modern scholarship about strategic and tactical concepts in the region of the eastern Mediterranean between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, from siege warfare and logistics, to individual strategic vision and command in the field. In the first contribution, Alan Murray, in his "The Middle Ground: The Passage of Crusade Armies to the Holy Land by Land and Sea (1096-1204)", focuses on the logistical problems facing the Crusaders who travelled to the Middle East and the complex issues relating to the choice of route, whether by land or sea, and the factors that directly or indirectly affected the decision-makers of the time. What prompted the kings, dukes and the rest of the pilgrims to travel through the Balkans and Constantinople, or rather to avoid Asia Minor altogether for a different ride via Italy and Cyprus? Murray identifies a significant change of strategy regarding the passage of the Crusader armies through southern Europe at the end of the twelfth century and scrutinizes the deeper reasons behind it while explaining whether any amphibious operation during the time of the First Crusade would have been feasible for the naval technology and organization of the Italian fleets of the time.

With the focus of the Crusaders after 1201 having been fixed on Egypt and with the conditions for a naval expedition in the eastern Mediterranean being far more favourable than one century before, Cornel Bontea investigates the tactical military thinking of the fourteenth century theorists against the Mamluks after the Fall of Acre (1291), that marked the end of the Latin presence in the Levant. In "the theory of the *passagium particulare*: a commercial blockade of the Mediterranean Sea in the early fourteenth century?" the author explores the tactical and conceptual ideas of the crusade theorists of the early fourteenth century and focuses on the implementation of the main Latin goal after 1291 which was the weakening of Egypt before undertaking any expedition against the Mamluks. Bontea delves into the meaning and use of the terms *passagium generale* and *passagium particulare*, with the latter being – in essence – a commercial blockade of the Mediterranean, and argues that the fourteenth century strategists that visualised any offensive action against the Muslims of Egypt, their approach was highly optimistic and hardly feasible considering the logistics of the era.

The period between 1174 and 1187 has been appraised by historians as one of political and military debacles, coloured largely by the defeat at the Horns of Hattin which was seen as a military inevitability. In particular, Guy of Lusignan, king consort of Jerusalem, has been largely depicted – by contemporary and modern historians alike – as an ineffectual monarch, incompetent military commander, and arrogant fool. Portrayals of the debacle at Hattin in 1187 and

subsequent loss of the majority of the Kingdom of Jerusalem seemingly confirms his unsuitability for command. By a careful re-examination of the primary sources, Stephen Bennett re-evaluates the events surrounding the Battle of Acre on 4th October 1189, in an attempt to provide a fresh perspective of King Guy's strategy in the early stages of the Third Crusade and to revisit his abilities as a general. In his 'Faith and Authority: Guy of Lusignan at the battle of Acre (4th October 1189)', Bennett argues that the evidence from the primary sources suggests that Guy displayed a broader strategic vision, as well as greater tactical skill than previously acknowledged. The author brilliantly contrasts the leadership of Guy and Saladin in the days leading up to the battle of Acre, highlighting the strategic attributes of Guy as the epitome of a medieval commander who managed to maintain the strategic advantage over both Saladin and his rival, Conrad of Montferrat.

The military history of the Latin East is full of spectacular sieges that have attracted the attention of historians due to the rich insight they provide on the technicalities of siege warfare of the period. The traditional image of crusader sieges is one of extreme savagery, unrestrained by any customary practice. However, we need to bear in mind whether modern historians are drawing too heavily on these, so-called, 'exemplar sieges' and they are omitting the lesser sieges and those instigated by the Muslim leaders. Is siege warfare in the Latin East really that brutal as it has been portrayed to-date? Ian Wilson's "By the Sword or by an Oath: Siege Warfare in the Latin East 1097–1131" offers a challenging view of the traditional interpretation of Latin siege warfare: What emerges from Wilson's observations is that siege warfare in Outremer was less intensive than the view projected by traditional historiography. The author examines numerous cases that demonstrate the Franks' willingness to explore diplomatic moves, if they reduced the risks of conducting a siege. And, as the example of Zengi shows, this was also true for the Muslim forces fighting the Franks in the Levant. In fact, the problem was not in the willingness in granting terms but in their implementation because of the dearth of trust and poor discipline. In this environment, martial prowess remained important but a man's word was of equal importance.

Part 4 of the volume narrows the scope of our enquiry into Mediterranean warfare by examining the military treatises in Byzantium. The so-called *Strategika* or *Taktika* are literary works that contained constitutions and treatises of military nature, which have been compiled by the author through personal experience or through oral tradition and other literary works of the past. These works greatly proliferated in the tenth century, when the Byzantines embarked on their conquests in the East and the Balkans, but they largely

disappear thereafter.[23] This kind of military literature is one of the fields in which cultural continuity between the Graeco-Roman world and Byzantium is more apparent.[24] We should also bear in mind that these manuals were a conscious adaptation to the geopolitical realities of the day and they encouraged improvisation in the battlefield rather than simply passing on obsolete battle-tactics.[25]

Originating in a long-term project to prepare a full critical edition of Ouranos' *Taktika*, Philip Rance's paper explores the subsequent and more obscure history of the Strategika in the Late Byzantine period (*c.*1050-*c.*1450). Rance's paper attempts to address for the first time the difficult question of the Late Byzantine readership of military literature, as reflected in evidence for aristocratic education and literary culture and in what can be inferred from manuscript production and ownership. In this context the paper introduces some hitherto unexploited manuscripts in the Topkapı Palace Library (TSMK G.İ. 19 and 36). It is hoped that insights offered here might have a wider relevance to military corpora of other cultures, such as Arabic and Turkish texts, which have been much less studied than their Byzantine counterparts.

Despite the proliferation of military treatises that characterises tenth century Byzantium, providing historians with a wealth of information on strategy and tactics based on experience and the study of past knowledge, experts and enthusiasts of the later Byzantine period following the Comnenian revival are seriously constrained by the conspicuous absence of such works for the next two and a half centuries. The contribution by N. Kanellopoulos offers a new perspective on the military writings of Theodore I Palaiologos, second born son of Andronikos II and Iolanda of Montferrat and nephew of the marquis of Montferrat Giovanni I (1292-1305). It was Theodore's specific intention for his treatise to be used as a repository of knowledge and experience on how to confront the Empire's enemies, gathered through years of experience in the battlefields. Kanellopoulos' chapter attempts to amend Aldo Settia's established view that Theodore's "Les Enseignements ou Ordenances pour un seigneur qui a guerres et grans gouvernements a faire" (1326) reflects the reality

23 Nicephorus Phocas' *Military Praecepts* and an incomplete version of Nicephorus Uranus' *Taktika* can be found in: E. McGeer, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth: Byzantine Warfare in the Tenth Century*, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC 1995.

24 G. Theotokis, "From Ancient Greece to Byzantium: Strategic Innovation or Continuity of Military Thinking?," in *Antiquitas Viva 4: studia classica*, eds. B. Kukjalko, O. Lāms, I. Rūmniece, Riga 2014, pp. 106-18; S. Cosentino, "Writing about War in Byzantium," *Revista de Historia das Ideias* 30 (2009), 83-99.

25 T.G. Kolias, "Η Πολεμική Τακτική των Βυζαντινών: Θεωρία και Πράξη," in K. Tsiknakes (ed.) *Byzantium at War* (*9th-12th c.*), Athens 1997, pp. 153-64.

of war in Italy during the first decades of the fourteenth century. The author rather highlights the influence of the Eastern – mainly Byzantine – style of warfare on the writings of Theodore Montferrat and the numerous similarities that can be traced between the eastern and western 'cultures of war.'

In the same mindset of scrutinizing the value of works written by high officials of the Late Byzantine army, Savvas Kyriakides provides an assessment of the *Histories* of John Kantakouzenos – a narrative for the period 1320-1362 – as a source of military history. Although Kantakouzenos was an important eyewitness of the military operations he described in his work, as he held the office of *megas domestikos* of the Imperial Army for over two decades, his objectivity is hampered by political ambitions. According to the author, Kantakouzenos' aim was to explain his role in the civil wars and conflicts between cliques of the social elite in the middle of the fourteenth century. Kyriakides' investigation examines Kantakouzenos' accounts of military operations and his views about warfare. It also assesses his knowledge of military tactics and explains the factors that shaped his descriptions of military conflicts, mainly his personal agenda and the extent to which he is consciously trying to adhere to established precepts which can be found in military manuals.

The Final Section of This Volume, Part 5 '*Military Roles within Society*'

The *stradiots* (*stradioti*), mercenary light cavalry corps of Greek, Albanian and Slav origin, were recruited by the Republic of Venice from the First Ottoman-Venetian War (1463-79) to the end of the eighteenth century. During the seventeenth century we find them even as *cappelletti*, who offer their services to garrisons and camps of the Venetian hinterland and Dalmatia. Furthermore, starting from the War of Gradisca (1615-17) the *Serenissima* initiated the recruitment of mercenary groups of 'Greek' infantry (*compagnie* or *milizie greche*). Stathis Birtachas' paper investigates the reasons and methods of recruitment of the aforementioned mercenary companies, their martial skills and tactics, including a number of fresh perspectives regarding their particular ethnic, social and cultural identity.

A fundamental aspect of warfare in any period of time was intelligence by which, according to Clausewitz, "we mean every sort of information about the enemy and his country – the basis, in short, of our own plans and operations."[26]

26 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton 1976, p. 117.

Correct and accurate intelligence-gathering on broad issues such as economics, political assessments, military capabilities and intentions of foreign nations amount to what we now call strategic intelligence. Intelligence about the enemy could be procured in two ways, by reconnaissance (or tactical intelligence), or by espionage, when disguised or hidden agents were operating in secret in enemy territory to collect information about the enemy! Papadamou's paper considers the role of spies in the strategic – for the Venetian Empire – island of Corfu during the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Papadamou investigates a possible conspiracy movement and a series of unedited cases of espionage that took place in the island of Corfu during the building of new fortifications by the *Repubblica di San Marco* between 1576 and 1588-9. The author surveys a number of points regarding their 'espionage activities': their recruitment methods, their social and ethnic background and their points of embarkation, their methods of collecting intelligence, their 'intelligence tricks,' their intelligence network in the island of Corfu and how developed it was during this period of conflict in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Finally, the author considers the counter-intelligence mechanisms set up by the Venetian authorities in Corfu to defend against the activities of their regional adversaries, the Ottomans and the Spanish.

Jacopo Pessina's paper analyzes the social composition of the militia officers of the Republic of Lucca's outlying areas during the second half of the sixteenth century in order to understand the degree to which their economic power may have influenced the appointment of those militias' rank and file. The idea that until the 1630s the non-urban militias were composed of the poorest people, motivated to enlist in order to obtain privileges, has been proved as without solid foundation. Using the fiscal archival sources, the data analysis highlights the fact that the appointment of militia officers took into account not only the families' material wealth, but also their socio-political influence and kinship relations. Pessina's paper contributes to the academic debate in two ways. First, it presents the case of a Italian republican micro State's provincial elite, on which there are no studies. Second, he will show that, already by the sixteenth century, the militia mirrored the provincial social structure and helped to consolidate the power of the elites. The officers were members of the richest and most influential local families, or at least they had close relationships with them.

Aysel Yıldız's paper, on the other hand, directs our attention to another important military corps of the late Medieval and early modern period, surviving from fourteenth century to 1826 to be replaced by more Westernized models. Similar the European counterparts, the bulk of the European military system was composed of field-based cavalry forces (*tımarlı sipahi*). Yet, the

revenues from the Mediterranean and other international trade networks allowed the Ottoman rulers to keep a standing and cash-paid army, namely the janissary corps. Until the mid-seventeenth century, the recruitment to these corps depended the levy of non-Muslim boys (the so-called *devshirme* system), with the purpose of creating a rootless, 'socially dead' soldiery completely dependent and obedient to the sultan. Their military training in the palace was also accompanied with a process of Turkification and Islamization, after which they would be ready to serve in bureaucratic, administrative and military duties. The issue of whether the janissaries were military slaves or not is beyond the scope of this paper, but the system was indeed one of the rare and creative military institutions of the early modern period. More interestingly, despite prolific studies on the janissary corps, no systematic survey has so far been conducted on the command system of the corps.[27] Therefore, Yıldız's work aims at filling this important gap in the available literature. Therefore, it is a prosopographic study of an elite military group, the commanders of the famous janissary army of the Ottoman Empire. She argues that the study of the janissary ağas provides many insights not only to the military but also the political history of the Ottoman Empire. During the course of its long history, the promotion patterns of the janissary ağas changed substantially and vital changes occurred especially between the periods of 1515- 1603, 1603-1704 and 1704-1826. During the first period, the janissary ağas were exclusively recruited from the palace members and their chances of promotion to higher positions were greater, while during the second period the professionalization and institutionalization had became important with greater independence from the person of the Sultan. In the final period, promotions of the ağas to higher administrative positions decreased sharply. The bureaucratization of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the modernization (especially in the military field) process made the janissary ağas almost a marginal group within the state apparatus.

27 For further reading on Ottoman military system, see Uyar, M. and Erickson, E. J., *A Military History of the Ottomans, From Osman to Atatürk* California; Oxford 2009; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapukulu Ocakları 1: Acemi Ocağı ve Yeniçeri Ocağı*, Ankara 1998; Kaldy-Nagy, G. "The First Centuries of Ottoman Military Organization," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 31 (1977), pp. 147-183.

PART 1

Naval Activity

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CHAPTER 1

The Byzantine War Navy and the West, Fifth to Twelfth Centuries

T.C. Lounghis

It is a commonplace that with the twilight of antiquity the distance between geographical locations, formerly very familiar to each other, seems to have grown unexpectedly, thus separating lands which up until that time possessed a common culture. The decline of ancient cities as market centres implies that most trade now had to be conducted via the seas. By 440/441 the Vandal king Geiseric, had troubled the government of Theodosius II (408-450) by seizing islands from the Eastern Roman Empire and proclaiming himself 'king of the earth and sea'.[1] A feeling of insecurity seemed to expand as everyone presumed that the sea had become more dangerous than it was during the earlier decades. According to Novel VII, 3, published by Theodosius II and Valentinian III (425-455) on 29 December 440 the Roman government claimed to act as the old Romans did, that is to place the interests of the *res publica* above their own imperial interests and, consequently, to push the Roman boundaries to the end of the world[2] and that was the way that the future Byzantine naval policy has been settled for the first time. But, for the time being, the outcome of this imperial engagement was a persistent determination to sail against the Vandal Africa despite temporary devastating failures such as that of 467/8.[3] The naval campaign of 533 under Belisarius settled the matter sharply by extinguishing the Vandals as a nation and by re-establishing East Roman domination in North Africa, this time to last as long as 698,[4] when the once so glorious city of Carthage was definitely conquered by the Muslims. This final conquest of

1 Theophanes, *Chronographia,* p. 101: *ῥῆγα καλέσας ἑαυτὸν γῆς τε καὶ θαλάσσης.*

2 Theodosius, *Theodosiani libri XVI cum Constitutionibus Sirmondianis et leges novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes*, pp. 19-20, Nov. VII, 3: *Nos enim singulis atque universis ea provisionum maiestate consulimus, qua res Romana paulatim ad totius orbis terrarum processit imperium … Quis dubitat suis commodis veteres rei pubicae commoda praeferentes mundi finibus fines imposuisse Romanos?*

3 On the campaign of 467/8, cf. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome,* p. 30, 39, 44.

4 Cf. Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Etudes d'histoire maritime de Byzance. A propos du "Thème des Caravisiens",* Paris 1966, and the most important old study of Gelzer, *Die Genesis der byzantinischen Themenverfassung,* pp. 10-11, 29-32.

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Carthage would be a landmark regarding the re-organization of the Byzantine navy.

Generally speaking, no modern historian, not even the most famous theoretician of sea power A.F. Mahan,[5] envisaged a step by step strategic retreat at sea, similar to the usual long retreats of ground forces. Most of the important naval encounters in history were decided by great battles; such was the case of Salamis, Actium, Lepanto, Trafalgar, Jutland and so on. However, navies with long traditions[6] may remain idle for a while or, even worse, diminish in numbers and decline in effectiveness, but they do not disappear. They simply need time to adapt themselves to new realities.

As I have elsewhere suggested,[7] the historical outline of the condition of the Byzantine navy from the fifth to the end of the twelfth century was marked by three major naval administrative reforms, which need to be identified:

1. The disappearance of the formerly mighty fleet of the *Caravisiani,* known until the beginning of the eighth century, and the establishment of the provincial fleet of the Kibyrrhaeotae (first decades of the eighth century as gathered from Theophanes, the *Liber Pontificalis* and some imperial letters).
2. The naval administrative reform, which certainly took place under the first two emperors of the Macedonian dynasty, Basil I (867-886) and Leo VI (886-912), and resulted in the subjugation of all existing units of the fleet to the new priorities of the dynasty (as suggested by *Theophanes Continuatus,* the *De administrando imperio* and the *De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*).[8]
3. The attempt by Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118) to build a new fleet and to impose a single naval high command, something that must have remained unchanged throughout the twelfth century and until the conquest of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade (as evident from the texts of Anna Comnena, John Kinnamos and Nicetas Choniates).

5 Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History.*

6 Cf. in this aspect Kolias, "Die byzantinische Kriegsmarine. Ihre Bedeutung im Verteidigungssystem von Byzanz", p. 133.

7 Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity (407-1204),* pp. 59-60.

8 In 1981 Vlysidou, "Συμβολή στη μελέτη της πολιτικής του Βασίλειου Α΄ στη δεκαετία 867-877", pp. 301-315, argued that Basil I gave absolute priority to western affairs over all other political problems and issues.

Little is known about the early organization of the East Roman fleet. It seems to have been brought together only occasionally. This appears to have changed with the naval campaigns against the Vandals down to the campaign of Belisarius in 533. But in 626 the *magister officiorum* Bonus, as head of the Constantinopolitan defences, armed many ships to repulse the Avar assault.[9] Emperor Constans II (642-668) had a great fleet at his disposal in 655[10] and 663[11] for his Western campaign. His son and heir Constantine IV (668-685), with totally different aims from his father, seems to have twice constructed (*κατεσκεύασε*)[12] a large squadron. Towards the end of the seventh century (that is simultaneously or almost with the fall of Carthage), the main military naval units of the Byzantine Empire (that is the first *Thema* the *Caravisiani*) are officially mentioned in the famous *jussio* of emperor Justinian II (685-695 and 705-711) to Pope John V (685-686) if, of course, we prefer the *lectio Carabisiani* instead of *Calarisiani*.[13] Notwithstanding if in this document the *Caravisiani* are mentioned or not, they appear most clearly only a couple of years afterwards and -what is most surprising- this large fleet seems to have had its main operational base in the Western Mediterranean, possibly Carthage until 698[14] and, after the loss of this crucial bulwark of Byzantine domination in Africa, somewhere in the Aegean but by all means not in Constantinople!

From all the above and in accordance with what happened during the long-lasting Arab onslaught in the seventh century, we can conclude that 1) The

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9 Nicephorus, *Nicephori Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani Opuscula historica*, p. 18.

10 Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, pp. 345-346. Cf. also Christides, "The Naval Engagement of Dhat as-Sawari A.H. 34/A.O. 655/656: A Classical Example of Naval Warfare Incompetence", pp. 1329-1346.

11 Doubts on the existence of a fleet under Constans II in 663 in Stratos, *Το Βυζάντιον στον 7ο αιώνα*, p. 210.

12 Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, p. 353. Nicephorus, *Nicephori archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opuscula historica*, p. 32 (to repulse the Arabs in 673-678). Cf. also Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, p. 358. Nicephorus, *Nicephori archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opuscula historica*, p. 34 (for the Bulgarian campaign in 680).

13 The imperial letter (Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. 11, 737-738AB) has been sent in 687 and was accordingly received by Pope Conon (686-687).

14 Some modern historians (for instance Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century. The Transformation of a Culture,* p. 217 and also in his later studies and, after him Pryor/Jeffreys, *The Age of the Δρόμων. The Byzantine Navy ca 500-1204 with an Appendix translated from the Arabic of Muhammad ibn Mankali by A. Shboul,* p. 25 and notes) seem to believe that the main base was somewhere in the Aegean (Samos or Rhodes). I think that the expedition to Carthage in 695/6 as well the task of meeting the Pope at Kea, the existence of warships in North Africa as early as in the times of the Heraclii, father and son, testifies for somewhere in the West.

decline of the great fleet of the *Caravisiani* coincides *grosso modo* with the period from the fall of Carthage to the reign of Leo III (717-741) and with the Byzantine urgent need to possess a naval squadron at the new western maritime border of the Empire.[15] 2) The decline and final disappearance of the great fleet of the *Caravisiani* (probably by Leo III's forces in 727) coincides with the growth of the recently founded naval theme of the *Kibyrrhaeotae* (founded most probably under Justinian II just opposite of the island of Cyprus[16] in the early times of the so-called Arab-Byzantine *condominium*)[17] 3) From the beginning of the eighth century the naval squadron of the Kibyrrhaeotae in the East (mentioned until the third decade of the ninth century as *ὁ θεματικὸς στόλος*)[18] and the naval squadron of the theme of Sicily in the West succeeded to the Caravisiani and both constitute throughout the eighth century the only naval forces of the Byzantine Empire. The theme of the Aegean Sea which most probably was created after the reign of Michael II and maybe also after Theophilus around 843[19] and headed by a *drungarios*[20] was -we must believe- never in position to assist effectively the Byzantine defensive endeavours in the Aegean. 4) Thus Sicily and the Kibyrrhaeotae constituted the only naval forces trained to maintain and defend what I have tried a couple of years before to define as 'the Southern boundary of Byzantium'[21] which included also Crete and it is a serious blunder to believe that during the eighth century there were more 'thematic fleets'.

The ability of Byzantium to intervene in the West during the eighth century depended on stability in this southern boundary. The Byzantines reacted to the sudden and unexpected conquest of Crete by the Arabs of Spain (through Alexandria) in the third decade of the ninth century by the creation of the theme of the Aegean. In the same way the theme of Kibyrrhaeotae replaced

15 Last mention of the fleet of the Caravisiani in 710/11 (*Le Liber Pontificalis, Texte, introduction et commentaire*, pp. 389-390), where their commander-in-chief (*strategos* in the text) meets Pope Constantine (708-715) near the island of Kea-Keos.

16 Hild/Hellenkemper, *Kilikien und Isaurien* (*Tabula ImperiiByzantini 5*), pp. 45-47. Cf. also Yannopoulos, "Cibyrra et Cibyrréotes", pp. 520-529.

17 Cf. the classical study of Jenkins, "Cyprus between Byzantium and Islam, AD 688-965" pp. 1006-1014.

18 Theophanes Continuatus, p. 55.

19 "Acta graeca SS. Davidis, Symeonis et Georgii Mitylenae in insula Lesbo", p. 253.

20 "Tacticon Uspensky (843)", in ed. N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles,* p. 53, line 18.

21 Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity* (*407-1204*), pp. 74-76.

Cyprus as the eastern stronghold of defense.[22] Under Basil I, the empire abandoned its oecumenical pretensions in favour of defending its restricted dominion in Italy. It has to be noted that we have here the first mention of the Byzantine empire as New Rome in a secular political text and not having to do with religious affairs.[23] This empire of New Rome will have in future to act in the strictly limited space regarding its claims in the West while in Eastern Europe it will be totally free regarding its territorial expansion. For an expansion in the East there was a rather numerous army at disposal. In the West, intervention depended on the reorganized imperial naval forces.

The creation of the new naval theme of Samos in 899[24] constitutes a rather different case than that of the Aegean theme whose probable center was in Lesbos close to Samos. While the Aegean theme must have been insufficient if not inadequate in the task of 'absorbing' if not repulsing the enemy naval raids, the theme of Samos seems to be something like a local complement to the new Byzantine central naval strategy. Meanwhile the new commander-in-chief, if we can use that term, of the imperial navy was from now on the *δρουγγάριος τοῦ πλωίμου* promoted to the top of the naval hierarchy most probably by Basil I after occupying a lower position in the so-called *Tacticon Uspensky* (843).

It is almost certain that since the reign of the founder of the Macedonian dynasty the *drungarios of the ploimon* acquired an exceptional authority and prestige. He was clearly superior to the formerly glorious general of the Kibyrrhaeotae, despite the fact that the latter preceded him in the so-called *Cletorologion of Philotheos* of the year 899 (21st and 38th place respectively, something obviously reflecting a previous traditional hierarchical order).[25] In times to come the *strategos* of the Kibyrrhaeotae would never leave his 'home

22 Cf. for instance Yannopoulos, "Quelques "à coté" des expéditions byzantines contre l' émirat de Crète en 911 et 949", pp. 135-164, especially p. 141 and 148, where the difference of size between the imperial navy and that of the thematic units is apparent. Both themes of the Aegean and Samos created during the temporary 'collapse' of the Kibyrrhaeotae (from the fall of Crete down to the reign of Leo VI) never reached a great numerical strength.

23 At the same time, that is under Basil I, the western emperor Louis II of Italy (855-875) addresses his eastern colleague as *imperatori Novae Romae*. Cf. "Ludovici II imperatoris epistola ad Basilium", pp. 385-394.

24 Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*, p. 139, line 17 and p. 352, n. 367. Cf. also Eickhoff, *Seekrieg und Seepolitik zwischen Islam und Abendland. Das Mittelmeer unter byzantinischer und arabischer Hegemonie (650-740)*, Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIIe-XVe siècles*, pp. 79-81.

25 Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*, p. 101, line 22 and p. 103, line 3 respectively.

waters' in the broad sense of the term, which clearly means it would never set sail for the West any more. On the other hand, the chronologically later theme of Samos, plainly supported by the opposite Thracesian theme on the western Anatolian coast, seems to have been equally assigned to cruise mainly in the Aegean,[26] while the bulk of the imperial fleet under the *drungarios of the ploimon* should have its main base in the capital Constantinople.[27] The Aegean was well guarded by the local squadrons of the Kibyrrhaeotae, Aegean and Samos,[28] but soon the need arose to intervene in the West.

Under Basil I and his dynasty, the victories of the Kibyrrhaeotae would be in the Aegean. It seems almost certain that under the Macedonian emperors the Kibyrrhaeotae lost their previous pre-eminence.[29] Since the days of Leo VI, an imperial fleet (*βασιλικὸν πλώιμον*) consisting of sixty dromons, fifteen from the squadron of the Kibyrrhaeotae, ten from the squadron of Samos, seven from the Aegean squadron and (surprisingly) ten also from the theme of Hellas constituted a great naval expedition[30] bound to the West. However no source

26 Albeit the *strategos* of Samos precedes also the *drungarios* of the fleet in the *Cletorologion* (28th place) just like the *strategos* of the Kibyrrhaeotae (cf. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*, p. 101, line 30. Eickhoff, *Seekrieg und Seepolitik zwischen Islam und Abendland. Das Mittelmeer unter byzantinischer und arabischer Hegemonie (650-740)*, p. 84; Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIIe-XVe siècles,* pp. 79-81). A *strategos* is much superior to a *drungarios* in the thematic hierarchy. Cf. Gelzer, *Die Genesis der Byzantinischen Themenverfassung,* p. 116, 121.

27 *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur Liber quo Vita Basilii imperatoris amplectitur*, p. 234-236, chap. 68: (*ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς …*) *πλειόνων τριήρων καὶ διήρων κατασκευὴν ἐποιήσατο, καὶ τὰς ναυτικὰς δυνάμεις κατὰ τὴν βασιλίδα συναγαγὼν ἐκαραδόκει τὸ μέλλον …"Εμενεν ὅμως κατὰ τὴν βασιλεύουσαν ἡ ναυτικὴ πληθὺς….*

28 Despite his brilliant and thorough approach, fails to distinguish between the *βασιλικὸν πλώιμον* and *θεματικὸς στόλος*, Eickhoff, *Seekrieg und Seepolitik (650-740)*, pp. 81-82. The same uncertainty is also observable in Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIIe-XVe siècles,* p. 75 and Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles,* p. 340 and as well as the first chapter of Pryor/Jeffreys, *The Age of the Δρόμων. The Byzantine Navy ca 500-1204 with an Appendix translated from the Arabic of Muhammad ibn Mankali by A. Shboul*, pp. 7-77. For a useful approach on the distinction between the *βασιλικὸν πλώιμον* and *θεματικὸς στόλος*, see Pryor, "Byzantium and the Sea: Byzantine Fleets and the History of the Empire in the Age of the Macedonian Emperors c.900-1025 CE", pp. 83-104.

29 Cf. the obscure reference in the Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, 50,169-221, pp. 240-242 on the unsuccessful attempt of Leo VI to impose his representative to the Kibyrrhaeotae and the concomitant troubles until the death of Emperor Alexander (912-913).

30 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, "De Cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae", pp. 652-653, chap. 44.

mentions any Kibyrrhaeotic ship beyond the Adriatic while the presence of a great Byzantine fleet is so imposing under Basil I, that a Frankish source speaks of some four hundred imperial ships under a patricius (Nicetas Ooryphas in fact) before Bari in Southern Italy.[31] These numbers may be exaggerated. After Basil I, fleets sent to Italy rather than Sicily were substantial.

Meanwhile the reforms in the theme of Kibyrrhaeotae had started after this squadron as *ὁ θεματικὸς στόλος* had joined the rebellion of Thomas the Slavonian in 821-823 and the shameful failure of their *strategos* Crateros to recover Crete around the years 827-829, to last until around 913.[32] The provincial Kibyrrhaeotae continued to assume (under commanders trustworthy to the Macedonian dynasty as it appears from the *De administrando imperio*)[33] a rather independent role from the main fleet throughout the tenth and the eleventh centuries exclusively in the Aegean as it seems and it is possible that it may have existed down to the reign of Alexius I Comnenus.[34] The once equally mighty Sicilian squadron on the other hand could no longer moor or lay anchor in peace in Sicilian waters given the steady Arab advance on the island during the ninth century and especially after the fall of Syracuse in 878 and had to urgently retreat to Calabria (when precisely remains unknown).[35]

This naval policy could last only as long the imperial political boundaries reached the Tyrrhenian sea covering the Italian territories and could not last any more after 1071. This produced the new naval 'reform' under Alexius I which consisted in the creation of one single main fleet mooring more or less

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31 *Annales Bertiniani,* anno 869 (=*Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters, Quellen zur karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* II, Darmstadt 1972), 200: *Qui* (*Basilius*) *patricium suum ad Barram cum 400 navibus miserat, ut et Hludowico contra Sarracenos ferret suffragium*.... Cf. the old but immortal, in my view, study of Bury, "The naval Policy of the Eastern Roman Empire in relation to the Western Provinces from the 7th to the 9th century", pp. 21-66.

32 Theophanes Continuatus, p. 80. Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, p. 45. See above, n. 29 and Lounghis, *Byzantium in the Eastern Mediterranean: Safeguarding East Roman Identity* (*407 – 1204*), p. 61 and 94.

33 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, chap. 50, lines 174-176, pp. 240-242 and chap. 51, lines 131-132, p. 252.

34 The last known *strategos* o the Kibyrrhaeotae was a certain Constantine Kaballurios who fell fighting against the Russians in 1043, mentioned by Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, p. 432. Cf. Savvides, "The Secular Prosopography of the Byzantine Maritime Theme of the Carabisians/Cibyrraeots", pp. 24-45, person number 47, p. 35.

35 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De thematibus*. Cf. also Bury, *History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil the Macedonian* (*802-867*), p. 309 and Pertusi, "Il 'Thema' di Calabria: Sua formazione, lotte per la sopravvivenza. Società e clero di fronte a Bisanzio e a Roma", pp. 425-443, here p. 428.

permanently at Constantinople[36] (just as in the times of the Macedonian dynasty) and called by the principal contemporary Byzantine historical sources mostly 'the Roman fleet' (*ὁ ῥωμαϊκὸς στόλος*)[37] A small but apparently permanent squadron of 12 warships was also based in Cyprus.[38] The attempt of Alexius Comnenus to build a new imperial fleet and to impose a single naval command on it (the so called *μέγας δοὺξ*, less glorious than his predecessor) continued throughout the twelfth century and until the conquest of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade.[39] This title, and that of *drungarios* of the ploimon ceased to exist with the abolition of the naval themes.

Now, to the point: where did the 'western' story of the Byzantine navy start? Despite the imposing strength of the East Roman navy during the fifth century (three imposing naval campaigns in Africa against the Vandals (in 431,[40] in 441[41] and in 468[42] respectively, more than 1.000 ships on both latter times) the waters in Western Mediterranean were considered as very dangerous. The triple failure had some other causes. Procopius of Caesarea, who himself was a strong supporter of the conquest of former Roman territories in the West by the East Roman armed forces, asserts that if East Roman fleets sailed westwards of Sicily, heavy storms starting from the columns of Hercules could raise waves high enough to sink and destroy any ship afloat.[43] In another passage, he notes most unpleasant reactions by the frightened soldiers on board in case of an

36 On the harbor of Constantinople "where the fleet was accustomed to moor" (*ὅπου ὁ στόλος κατὰ τὸ εἰθισμένον προσώρμιστο*) see Comnena, *Alexiad*, book II, p. 82, chap. 11, para. 2. The fleet itself must have had no other arsenal or a shelter during the twelfth century besides Constantinople.

37 Comnena, *Alexiad*, IV, p. 124, 3, 1. Kinnamos, *Epitome*, p. 102. Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 52.

38 On the Cyprus squadron Comnena, *Alexiad*, IX, p. 263, 2, 4.

39 Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1096-1204)*, pp. 619-622 and Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity (407-1204)*, p. 60.

40 Procopius, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, vol. 1, book III, ch. 4, prgr. 1-11, pp. 324-326. Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography,* 95. Sources cited by Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome,* p. 27, n. 59; also p. 55.

41 Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, 101. Others sources and bibliography cited by Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome,* pp. 28-29, n. 64.

42 Procopius, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, vol. 1, book III, ch. 6, prgr. 1-23 = pp. 335-339. Other sources and bibliography in Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome,* pp. 44-45, notes 92-96.

43 Procopius, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, vol. 2, book VIII, ch. 6, prgr. 21-22 = p. 524.

eventual enemy attack at sea.[44] Thus Belisarius, like Byzantine military commanders, also preferred pitched battles on land. Apart from a naval attack by no less than 200 East Roman vessels which disembarked 8.000 troops in the gulf of Taranto in order to plunder and gain an 'infamous' victory over 'fellow Romans' as early as 508,[45] there was no major naval warfare in the Mediterranean throughout the sixth century.[46] And a Byzantine fleet will re-appear in strength in the sources only in 655 in the unlucky engagement of the so called Dhat as Sawari[47] to be followed by extensive ship-building by Constantine IV (668-685)[48] and the mooring of the general of the Caravisiani with his fleet in the bay of Skiathos a couple of years later.[49] However, the subject is not exhausted as it is well known that during his first reign (685-695), Justinian II most probably used a presumably strong naval squadron for transporting the Cypriots from their native island to the neighborhood of Cyzicus and vice-versa sometime around the council Quinisextum (691), according to the *De administrando imperio*.[50] And -as a *drungarius of the Kibyrrhaeotae* appears for the first time in 698-[51] we may presume that the foundation of a naval squad-

44 Procopius, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, vol. 1, book III, ch. 15, prgr. 22 = p. 379.

45 The attack was directed against the Ostrogoths of Italy of course. But the Chronicle of Count Marcellinus in 508 (*MGH, Auctores antiquissimi,* vol. XI, p. 97) recorded the event as follows: *Romanus comes domesticorum et Rusticus comes scholariorum cum centum armatis navibus totidemque dromonibus octo milia militum armatorum secum ferentibus ad devastanda Italiae litora processerunt et usque ad Tarentum antiquissimam civitatem adgressi sunt, remensoque mari inhonestam victoriam, quam piratico ausu Romani ex Romanis rapuerunt, Anastasio Caesari reportarunt.*

46 The naval battle off Sinigaglia between Byzantines and Ostrogoths with 50 and 47 ships respectively (resulting in a Byzantine victory) was the only violent engagement at sea which, however, ended by pedestrian fight on the decks. Cf. Goldstein, "How the Byzantines made use of the Adriatic Sea in the war against the Ostrogoths in 535-555", pp. 57-58. On the other hand, the whole Byzantine naval expedition to Spain in 552/3 seems to have departed from Italy or from Sicily, both firmly occupied by the Byzantines, but not from Constantinople and it has not met serious resistance. Cf. Lounghis, "*Sur les prémisses théoriques de* la reconquista byzantine dans la péninsule ibérique au VIe siècle", pp. 99-105.

47 Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, p. 345. Cf. Christides, as above, n. 10.

48 Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, p. 352: ... *κατεσκεύασε καὶ αὐτὸς* (Κωνσταντῖνος Δ΄) *διήρεις εὐμεγέθεις κακκαβοπυρφόρους καὶ δρόμωνας σιφωνοφόρους....*

49 Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des Miracles de Saint Démétrius, I : Le texte,* chap. 230, p. 208, chap. 295, pp. 230-231and chap. 296, p. 231.

50 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, p. 224, chap. 47, lines 1-25.

51 Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, p. 370. Nicephorus, *Nicephori archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opuscula historica*, p. 40. According to Hill, *A History of Cyprus,* p. 290, the Kibyrrhaeotic theme acquired its obvious naval character as a direct consequence of the existence of a joint Arab-Byzantine condominium on Cyprus. On its foundation cf.

ron of the Kibyrrhaeotae took place under the first reign of Justinian II just opposite of the recently (presumably in 688 according to R.J.H. Jenkins)[52] 'neutralized' island of Cyprus. It remains doubtful if the creation of such a new naval squadron meant that of the great fleet of the Carabisiani which however temporarily recovered Carthage from the Arabs in 697/8. Justinian II is known[53] to have at disposal many ships in various circumstances also during his second reign (705-711).

Since the last mention of a *stratigos Caravisianorum* (a certain Theophilus patricius)[54] dates from the year 710 and, on the other hand, a presumably great rebel fleet has been destroyed in the Aegean by the forces of Leo III (717-741), it is very tempting to conclude that the naval (as it seems) revolt of the so-called *Helladikoi and those of the Cyclades* (in the vague mention of Theophanes)[55] could have a broader content and a meaning embracing mostly the fleet of the Caravisiani often cruising till then in the Aegean. In the early eighth century the Caravisiani decayed while the thematic fleets of the Kibyrrhaeotae and of Sicily were the main defense of the 'southern boundary' until the simultaneous Arab attacks on Sicily and Crete in the 820s.

And if we begin to think this way, we can better understand both: a) why the Kibyrrhaeotae and Sicily almost simultaneously succeeded in the inheritance of the Caravisiani as main naval forces of the Empire and b) why the Arabs almost simultaneously attacked both Byzantine naval strongholds, Sicily and Crete in the twenties of the eighth century. It is not without any interest to mention that the immediate Byzantine reaction after the fall of Crete was to entrust the naval campaign of recovery to the general of the Kibyrrhaeotae Crateros in 827. The ambitious campaign met with an utterly defeat[56] and the

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Gregoriou-Ioannidou, "Το ναυτικό θέμα των Κιβυρραιωτών. Συμβολή στο πρόβλημα της ιδρύσεώς του", pp. 201-211.

52 Jenkins, "Cyprus between Byzantium and Islam AD 688-965", pp. 1006-1014.

53 Nicephorus, *Nicephori archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opuscula historica*, p. 44: *… ναῦς πολὺ πλεῖστας καὶ διαφόρους συναγείρας*. Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, p. 377: *ἐξοπλίσας στόλον πολύν*.

54 *Le Liber Pontificalis, Texte, introduction et commentaire*, p. 390.

55 Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, p. 405: *οἱ Ἑλλαδικοί τε καὶ οἱ τῶν Κυκλάδων νήσων*. Similar mention by Nicephorus, *Nicephori archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opuscula historica*, pp. 57-58: *οἱ τὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ τὰς Κυκλάδας νήσους οἰκοῦντες*. Cf. Korres, "Το κίνημα των "Ελλαδικῶν"", pp. 37-49.

56 Theophanes Continuatus, p. 80. Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, p. 45. Genesios, *Iosephi Genesii Regum Libri Quattuor*, book 2, p. 34, chap. 12. Cf. Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity (407-1204)*, p. 62, 66, 84, passim.

theme of the Kibyrrhaeotae had to withdraw (pushed to background?) from the main stage of operations[57] until re-appearing in the Aegean under the Macedonian emperors, now in a different shape and with more restricted aims and goals compared not only with the recently founded 'Constantinopolitan' fleet but also with the broader Italian tasks reaching Italy that the Kibyrrhaeotae had once fulfilled.[58] Now the reality was the loss of Crete and a dangerous invasion of Sicily.

So far it appears more or less that the creation or foundation of the naval themes of Sicily and the Kibyrrhaeotae during the Middle Byzantine period (the so called 'Dark Ages') was a reaction to Arab attacks and to acts of disloyalty in the themes. Minor naval 'appendixes' such as the themes of the Aegean, of Samos or a small naval squadron of the Helladic theme have been assigned or committed to clearly inferior roles, strictly limited to the Aegean Sea after the fall of Crete, to be soon overshadowed by the strength of the re-organized imperial navy.[59] For the time being however the situation was so difficult that Michael II (820-829) under whose reign the Byzantines had to endure the blows in Sicily and Crete and who also had attempted to appoint his trustworhy John Echimos as his representative (*ἐκ προσώπου*) in the Kibyrrhaeotae[60] was the first East Roman emperor to seek naval help from the West, that is from Venice; in response the doge Justinianus Parteciacus *quasdam bellicosas naves transmittere studuit*.[61]

57 Being the only *θεματικὸς στόλος* still in the years 821-823, the Kibyrrhaeotae followed the great uprising of Thomas the 'Slavonian', according to the sources (Theophanes Continuatus, p. 55: *τοῦ θεματικοῦ στόλου γίνεται ἐγκρατής …* Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, p. 32. Genesios, *Iosephi Genesii Regum Libri Quattuor*, book 2, p. 23, chap. 2: *οἱ μὲν κατὰ γῆν, οἱ δὲ κατὰ θάλασσαν … πάντα τὰ θέματα,* p. 24: *… καὶ ἐπὶ ναυμαχίαν προέρχεται*). Köpstein, "Zur Erhebung des Thomas", p. 79, n. 117. Pryor/Jeffreys, *The Age of the ΔΡΟΜΩΝ. The Byzantine Navy ca 500-1204,* p. 46.

58 Cf. for instance Bertolini, "Quale fu il vero obiettivo assegnato in Italia da Leone III 'Isaurico' all' armata di Manes, stratego dei Cibyrreoti?", pp. 15-49.

59 Yannopoulos, "Η οργάνωση του Αιγαίου κατά τη μεσοβυζαντινή περίοδο", pp. 200-224.

60 "Vita Antonii Iunioris (BHG 142)", p. 187, pp. 194-195. Cf. also Vlyssidou, *Αριστοκρατικές οικογένειες και εξουσία* (*9ος-10ος αι.*), p. 29, n. 4.

61 Johannes Diaconus, "Chronicum venetum", book 7, chap. 16. Dandulus, 'Chronicon', vol. 12, p. 170. Tafel/ Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig, I. Teil* (*814-1205*), p. 5. Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes,* I, *La dynastie d'Amorium* (*820-867*), p. 80. Bury, *History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil the Macedonian* (*802-867*), p. 301. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice. A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations,* p. 26. Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity* (*407-1204*), p. 124.

And indeed, the main unit of the Byzantine navy from now on was to be called 'imperial' (*βασιλικὸν πλώιμον*) under the well known *δρουγγάριος του πλωίμου* or *δελονγάρην τῆς πλοῦς, hoc est navalis exercitus princeps*, according to bishop Liutprand's naïve Greek in the tenth century.[62] Subrepticiously at the very beginning but discernible through the correspondence of patriarch Photius[63] and progressively faster as times advanced into the tenth century this imperial and Constantinopolitan fleet became a fleet more loyal to the landed aristocracy than to the state itself.

This is obvious because of the open insubordination sometimes evident in the imperial fleet in the West. That might be the reason that emperor Leo VI seems to have attached much attention to promoting his trustworthy formerly first oarsman (*πρωτελάτης*) in the imperial yacht (*ἀγράριον*) Podaron to the rank of *protospatharius* and to appoint him as general of the Kibyrrhaeotae in their new form.[64] On the contrary, the imperial fleet showed an absolute loyalty when the central power was held by a representative of the landed aristocracy such as Romanus I Lecapenus (920-944) or Nicephorus II Phocas (963-969) were most interested if not eager to send the fleet either further to Western Mediterranean (the former) or threatened the Christian West to plunder Italy and conquer Rome and Ravenna (the latter). It must be noticed that the fleet might have been seditious under Basil I[65] or reluctant to obey orders under Leo VI[66] but its commanders *drungarii of the fleet* were also sometimes victorious (as Nicetas Ooryphas, Nasar, Himerius, John Rhadenus),[67] while under Romanus I Lecapenus the fleet sailed successfully to the shores of Southern France destroying the permanent since 890, as it seems, Arab 'pirate-nest' of Fraxinetum.[68] The only great naval expedition sent by Nicephorous Phocas (who was so successful in the East) aiming to re-conquer the falling Sicily met with a

62 Liudprand of Cremona. 'Antapodosis', book 3, p. 79, chap. 26.

63 Vlysidou, *Εξωτερική πολιτική και εσωτερικές αντιδράσεις την εποχή του Βασίλειου Α΄,* pp. 61-63.

64 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, p. 252, chap. 51, lines 130-132.

65 Vlysidou, *Εξωτερική πολιτική και εσωτερικές αντιδράσεις την εποχή του Βασίλειου Α΄,* pp. 63-67.

66 Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity* (*407-1204*), p. 112 and pp. 142-144.

67 Cf. Karlin-Hayter, "When Military Affairs were in Leo's Hands": A Note on the Byzantine Foreign Policy (886-912)", pp. 15-40.

68 Theophanes Continuatus, pp. 454-455. Cf. also Eickhoff, *Seekrieg und Seepolitik zwischen Islam und Abendland. Das Mittelmeer unter byzantinischer und arabischer Hegemonie* (*650-740*), pp. 317-318; Pryor/Jeffreys, *The Age of the Δρόμων. The Byzantine Navy ca 500-1204 with an Appendix translated from the Arabic of Muhammad ibn Mankali by A. Shboul*, p. 69.

total disaster,[69] something that did not appease his aggressive mood against not so much the Arabs but the contemporary Christian Byzantine allies in the West, as testified by Liutprand of Cremona in 968.[70]

Each time the Eastern Roman Empire intended to send naval forces to the Western Mediterranean, the possession of Sicily as a junction of the Adriatic with the Tyrrhenian Sea was a *conditio sine qua non*.[71] Both Romanus Lecapenus and Nicephorous Phocas, emperors not belonging to the Macedonian dynasty but obviously having discernible strong supports in the imperial naval forces since the days of Basil I and patriarch Photius, conducted expeditions to the West via Sicily, in the style of Belisarius.[72] The sources of the tenth century, supporting the reigning dynasty, attempt twice (after 878 and after 902) to ascribe the fall of Syracusae and of Taormina to deliberate idleness if not open treachery of the noble (*γενναῖος* in the meaning of nobility by Genesius) admiral Adrianos in 878[73] and the equally noble admiral Eustathios in 902[74] respectively, using exactly the same motive of church-building in Constantinople. The loyal admiral Nasar had to take severe measures against mutiny

69 *Leonis Diaconi Caloensis Historia, scriptoresque alii ad res byzantinas pertinentes*, book 4, pp. 65-68, chaps. 7-8. Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, pp. 261-262 and (first military expedition of his reign) pp. 267-268. Cf. Lounghis, "Le poids spécifique du commandement suprême en Italie dans la formation de l'idéologie politique du Xe siècle", pp. 153- 164, here pp. 158-159. That may also be the cause that the Macedonian emperors sought to keep under their permanent control the recently reformed Kibyrrhaeotic theme in the Aegean.

70 Liudprand of Cremona. "Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana", p. 192, chap. 11.

71 Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity,* p. 115

72 Procopius, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia,* vol. I, Bella I-IV, book III, ch. 10, prgr 14-16=pp. 357-358. Procopius, *Procopiii Caesariensis opera omnia,* vol. I, Bella I-IV, here III, ch. 13, prgr. 21 and Procopius, *Procopii Caesariensis,* vol. I. Bella I-IV, book III, ch. 14. prg. 15 = pp. 372-375.

73 Theophanes Continuatus, pp. 309-310. Genesios, *Iosephi Genesii Regum Libri Quattuor*, book 4, pp. 82-83, chap. 33. Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, pp. 158-160. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De thematibus,* p. 96. *Georgii Monachi vitae recentiorum imperatorum*, p. 843. *Symeonis Magistri ac Logothetae Annales*, p. 691.Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople, *Letters*, ep. 75, p. 326. The patriarch Nicholas I Mysticus of Constantinople did not belong to the supporters of the dynasty but made some 'concessions'. Cf. Vlysidou, *Εξωτερική πολιτική και εσωτερικές αντιδράσεις την εποχή του Βασίλειου Α΄,* 37 ff., n. 28.

74 *Georgii Monachi vitae recentiorum imperatorum*, p. 860. Cf. Dolley, "The Lord High Admiral Eustathios Argyros and the Betrayal of Taormina to the African Arabs in 902", pp. 340-353. In case that admiral Eustathios was an Argyros, then he was renowned for his wealth and very popular amongst the army and the navy (Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, pp. 188-189).

and preferred to send the fleet to Southern Italy rather than Sicily as J.Gay and E.Eickhoff already noted.[75] By sending Byzantine elite troops to Southern Italy instead of Sicily, which would be from now on abandoned to its own resources the East Roman Empire initiated a brand new era and new mighty expedition to Southern Italy (where Bari after 876 was the capital) – and sometimes deliberately avoiding a landing in Sicily-[76] would follow one another.[77] Sicily will constitute a target of the Byzantine imperial fleet only under Nicephorus Phocas in 963 and, considerably later, under Michael IV (1034-1041).[78] Despite the proud statement of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos that the 'emperor of Constantinople', as he says, was 'master of the whole Mediterranean'[79] the so much praised *θαλασσοκρατία* hardly belonged to the reigning dynasty during the minorities of the brothers Basil II and Constantine VIII.[80] Despite the well-known statement of Kekaumenus in the late seventies of the eleventh century that the fleet constitutes 'the glory of Romania',[81] we may presume that it was quite ineffective, if not in decay mooring quietly in Constantinople[82] when the mutinous Comneni and Ducae entered the city on Good Thursday of 1081. In any case, Alexius's first naval operations were undertaken on a very small scale and by small boats (the term used by the source is *ἀκατίοις*),[83] while one year after his accession (spring of 1082) and the easy seizure of the nearly dismantled imperial fleet, there appeared a new Byzantine naval squadron[84] acting together with the Venetians[85] in spite of Anna's statement that as late as 1086

75 Gay, *L'Italie méridionale et l'empire byzantin depuis l' avènement de Basile Ier jusqu'à la prise de Bari par les Normands (867-1071)*, p. 112. Eickhoff, *Seekrieg und Seepolitik zwischen Islam und Abendland. Das Mittelmeer unter byzantinischer und arabischer Hegemonie (650-740)*, pp. 238-239.

76 The naval campaign of Nasar in 880 for instance only plundered the Sicilian coast around Palermo and sailed immediately to Italy. According to the *Vita di Sant' Elia il Giovane,* p. 36, chap. 25. Nasar had only forty five warships under his command. On his naval campaign Genesios, *Iosephi Genesii Regum Libri Quattuor*, book 4, p. 83-84.

77 Cf. Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity (407-1204)*, p. 133.

78 Cf. Felix, *Byzanz und die islamische Welt im früheren 11. Jahrhundert,* pp. 183-187.

79 The term used in the Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De thematibus,* p. 96 is *θαλασσοκρατεῖν.*

80 Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, p. 322.

81 Kekaumenos, *Sovety i rasskazy: pouchenie vizantiiskogo polkovodtsa XI veka*, p. 308, chap. 87.

82 Comnena, *Alexiad*, II, pp. 82-83, 11, 1-5 (cf. above, n. 39), and III, p. 89, 2, 1.

83 Comnena, *Alexiad*, III, p. 115, 11, 2.

84 Comnena, *Alexiad*, IV, p. 124, 3, 1.

85 Comnena, *Alexiad*, IV, p. 133, 6, 4: *ταῖς νηυσὶ τοῦ ῥωμαϊκοῦ καὶ βενετικικοῦ στόλου.*

her father did not possess a suitable fleet[86] and a Byzantine naval squadron appeared on the Danube against the Pechenegs in 1087.[87] After a temporarily brief interchange of titles, such as *μέγας δρουγγάριος*[88], *δοὺξ τοῦ στόλου*[89] and *μέγας δρουγγάριος τοῦ στόλου*,[90] the supreme commander of the unique Byzantine fleet during the whole Comnenian era[91] will be called *μέγας δοὺξ* (sometimes *τοῦ στόλου*).[92]

Under the reign of Alexius I the furthest point reached by the newly re-built and re-organized Byzantine fleet was Otranto at the beginning of the twelfth century (where it failed to take the city) and that had been done only by disregarding imperial orders.[93] Otherwise, the imperial fleet was confined in the Aegean, the raid in Otranto being an exception. East Roman naval squadrons moored mostly off Dyrrhachium (in the North) or Cape Maleas (in the South)[94] in order to prevent western attacks by Normans, Genoese or even Venetians.[95] It becomes clear that under Alexius I, the former western boundary was moved closer to the capital that is to the Adriatic coast of the Balkans, while the total domination on the entire Adriatic Sea belonged now to the Venetians, who are very seriously depicted by Nicetas Choniates as descendants of the old Phoenicians.[96] Only as late as 1111 Alexius Comnenus was ready for naval warfare against the Genoese but, even at that moment, his stance towards the West

86 Comnena, *Alexiad*, VI, p. 197, 13, 1: *οὐδέπω γὰρ στόλος ηὐτρέπιστο.*.

87 Comnena, *Alexiad*, VI, p. 193, 11, 3. Transport ships were also sent in Lesbos in 1086/7: *διὰ πλοίων ἀποστείλας* (Alexius) *ἀποχρῶσαν δύναμιν* (Comnena, *Alexiad*, VII, p. 222, 8, 2), while 'another fleet' (*ἕτερος στόλος*) composed by warships was able to seize Lesbos a Chios under Constantine Dalassenos who is pompously called *θαλασσοκράτωρ* (Comnena, *Alexiad*, IX, p. 261, 1, 8).

88 Comnena, *Alexiad*, XII, p. 381, 8, 8.

89 Comnena, *Alexiad*, X, p. 302, 7, 2 and X, p. 304, 8, 3.

90 Comnena, *Alexiad*, XI, p. 353, 10, 9. Cf. also Oikonomides, "Ὁ μέγας δρουγγάριος Εὐστάθιος Κυμινειανός καί ἡ σφραγίδα του", pp. 901-907.

91 Cf. the typically Byzantine expression of Anna (Comnena, *Alexiad*, XI, p. 336, 5, 3) referring to the year 1097 and having to do with the naval affairs and more precisely with the high command of the fleet: *τήν τε τοῦ στόλου ἐξουσίαν καὶ τὴν τοῦ πλοὸς ἅπασαν οἰκονομίαν*.

92 Cf. Stein, *Untersuchungen zur spätbyzantinischen Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte,* (as above, n. 43), p. 57. Guilland, "Les chefs de la marine byzantine: drongaire de la flotte, grand drongaire de la flotte, duc de la flotte, megaduc", pp. 212-240.

93 Comnena, *Alexiad*, XII, pp. 378-38, 8, 2-7. Thus acted Isaac Contostephanos commanding the naval forces and *παραβλεψάμενος τὰ προστεταγμένα*.

94 Comnena, *Alexiad*, XI, pp. 353-354, 11, 1-2.

95 Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity* (*407-1204*), 170.

96 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 171.

was purely defensive.[97] At the other end of the Byzantine naval defence system the twelve 'Cypriot ships' (*Κύπριαι τριήρεις*) sailed as far as Acre in Palestine in order to pay a 'courtesy visit' to the Crusader states.[98] This Cypriot Byzantine squadron was now crossing the 'Syrian Sea', considered by Anna Comnena as an extension of the Aegean.[99] Moreover she thinks that the danger from Italy is at least equally threatening the Empire, as much the dangers coming from the North and from the East.[100]

From now on things and events are darkened. According to Nicetas Choniates (whose treatment of the naval affairs obeys mostly to literary principles), John II Comnenus (1118-1143) reduced state tax-funds which were formerly spent on provincial shipbuilding and thus, provincial-built warships nearly disappeared.[101] Choniates describes the shipbuilding of 1147/8 under Manuel II (1143-1180) prior to the Corfu expedition.[102] Following a violent storm in 1149 in the Adriatic that nearly destroyed the Byzantine fleet,[103] the emperor seems to have possessed the required resources to build another naval force soon.[104] However at a most imprecise date (1148 or 1155/6?), forty Norman galleys made an unexpected and swift raid against the obviously unprotected imperial capital Constantinople and immediately retired after shooting some arrows against the palace of Blachernae.[105] Apparently in 1149, there was a Byzantine naval victory over a Sicilian squadron carrying the king of France Louis VII (1137-1180), who barely escaped captivity.[106] In 1154, the nobleman Constantine Angelus, appointed by

97 Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1096-1204)*, p. 623.

98 Comnena, *Alexiad*, XIV pp. 432-433, 2, 12. Cf. also Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1096-1204)*, pp. 619-622. Alexius I wished to secure Cypriot affairs (*ἔγνω τὰ κατὰ τὴν Κύπρον ἀσφαλίσασθαι*)

99 Comnena, *Alexiad*, I, p. 19, 4, 4. A further raid of the Byzantine fleet off the Syrian coast under John II Comnenus is mentioned by Kinnamos, *Epitome*, p. 35.

100 Comnena, *Alexiad*, VI p. 172, 3, 3.

101 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 55. Cf. The doubts expressed by Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1096-1204)*, pp. 624-627. However, he bluntly asserts: *Unter Johannes II. Komnenos führte die byzantinische Kriegsflotte eher ein Shattendasein.*

102 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 77, lines 13-29.

103 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 89.

104 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 95: *ἑτέραν ναυτικὴν δύναμιν.*

105 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 99.

106 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, p. 87, p. 92, p. 98, p. 101.. Cf. also Runciman, *A History of the* Crusades, p. 286, n. 1.

Manuel as commander of the fleet, was captured by the Normans and taken to Sicily as a prisoner.[107] Manuel's Italian campaign must have been undertaken with a modest number of ships; as early as after the conquest of Corfu (1148) according to John Kinnamos, a sudden storm destroyed the major part of the Byzantine fleet gathered off Dyrrhachium under Constantine Angelus in order to set sail for Italy.[108] In any case it is difficult to presume why in 1154 the new Byzantine naval commander in Italy Michael Palaeologus arrived in Pescara with only ten ships,[109] taking also into account that towards the end of the unsuccessful Italian campaign the Byzantine fleet consisting of only fourteen fled at the first sight of the enemy.[110]

The destruction of the great fleet sent to Egypt by Manuel I under Andronicus Contostephanos[111] in 1169/70 seems to have been the 'beginning of the end' of Byzantine sea power. The warships mentioned by the sources steadily diminish in numbers from 1150 in 1171[112] to 100 in 1185.[113] During the reign of Isaac II Angelus (1185-1195) only 70 warships are said to have sailed against the 'tyrant' of Cyprus, Isaac Comnenus.[114] During the siege of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1203, only twenty 'rotten' and 'warm eaten' vessels are mentioned.[115]

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107 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, pp. 121-122. Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 96.

108 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, p. 102.

109 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, p. 137: *... ναυσὶ δέκα εἰς Πεσχάραν ἔπλει..*

110 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, pp. 162-163): *... ἀποδειλιάσαν τὸ Ῥωμαίων ναυτικὸν ἅτε κομιδῇ ὀλίγον ὂν (τέσσαρες γὰρ πρὸς ταῖς δέκα αἱ πᾶσαι νῆες ἦσαν αὐτῷ.* On the exact numbers of ships sent by Manuel I to Italy, see also Vlysidou/Lampakis/Leontsini/Lounghis, *Βυζαντινά στρατεύματα στη Δύση (5ος -11ος αι.)*, pp. 464-465.

111 Kinnamos, *Epitome*, pp. 278-280. Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 160. William of Tyre, *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum. Recueil des historiens des Croisades. Historiens occidentaux* book 19, p. 961, chap. 13, describes the different kinds of ships composing the Byzantine fleet bound to Egypt in 1169. Cf. Lounghis, *Byzantium in Eastern Mediterranean. Safeguarding East Roman Identity*, p. 44, n. 269.

112 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 172. Cf. also Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1096-1204)*, p. 631.

113 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 362. Cf. also Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1096-1204)*, p. 632, n. 63.

114 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, pp. 369-370. Cf. also Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1096-1204)*, p. 633, n. 66.

115 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 541.

Thus we could give a partial answer to the problem identified by T. Kolias to wit that the history of the Byzantine navy has not yet been written.[116] Indeed, its history can be examined partially, through its successive administrative reforms and their broader political, economic and social context. At a first glance it is surprising that the government of Constantinople acquired 'its own fleet' only after 827; by the Comnenian era the Constantinopolitan fleet would be the only fleet of the Empire. Both changes seem to hide major economic, social and political needs. It is however worth noting that the East Roman Empire seems to have maintained unlimited Mediterranean claims as long as its naval forces were of 'provincial' and not of Constantinopolitan origin. When the main fleet turned to a Constantinopolitan naval force, then its caliber had to be restrained and confined to lesser expeditions. This constitutes a significant but totally unnoticed feature of Byzantine imperial history.

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116 Kolias, "Die byzantinische Kriegsmarine. Ihre Bedeutung im Verteidigungssystem von Byzanz", p. 133 (above, n. 6).

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CHAPTER 2

The Defence of the Venetian *Dominio Da Mar* in the Sixteenth Century: Ship Design, Naval Architecture, and the Naval Career of Vettor Fausto's *Quinquereme*

Lilia Campana

Introduction

The Venetian humanist Vettor Fausto (1490-1546) was a true Renaissance polymath: naval architect, mathematician, engineer, professor of Greek, avid traveler, and philologist. He earned a place of honor in the pantheon of Renaissance innovators with the construction of his quinquereme, and became the acclaimed genius of the *renovatio navalis* promoted by the Doge Andrea Gritti (1455-1538).[1] In 1525, Fausto proposed to the Venetian Senate to build a quinquereme. He claimed that his design was based on the *quinqueremis* 'used by the Romans during their wars', and that he had derived the construction proportions for his ship 'from the most ancient Greek texts'.[2] A few months later the Senate granted Fausto permission to proceed with the project and assigned a ship-shed for his use in the Arsenal.[3] In October 1526 Fausto began the construction of his ship, working alongside the other shipwrights in the Arsenal. Fausto's *quiqueremis* was designed as a 28-bench galley rowed *alla sensile* ('in the simple way') by five rowers on each bench on either side, each

1 Campana, "Vettor Fausto, Professor of Greek at the School of Saint Mark". The author is also working on a monograph on Vettor Fausto's literary works and naval activity in the Arsenal.

2 Venice, Archivio di Stato (hereafter ASVe), Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, folios not numbered. On the quinquereme and Fausto's work in the Arsenal, see: Concina, *Navis*, p. 55; Bash, "Construction privée et construction d'Etat", p. 34; Eliav, "The Oar System of the Venetian Quinquereme;" Hocker and McManamon, "Medieval Shipbuilding in the Mediterranean", pp. 16-18. For the Roman *quinqueremis*, see: Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, pp. 101-6, 113-44; Morrison and Coates, *The Athenian Trireme*, pp. 2, 9, 11, 23, 157; Casson, *Ships and Seafaring*, pp. 79-95; Morrison, "Hellenistic Oared Warships", pp. 68-9; Shaw, "Oar Mechanics and Oar Power", pp. 163-71; Morrison and Coates, *Greek and Roman Oared Warships*, pp. 57-66, 294-6, and 355-61.

3 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, fol. 62r.

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with his own oar.[4] The quinquereme was completed in January 1529 and launched in April of the same year, amid general skepticism, which Fausto soon dispelled when his galley won a race against the light galley *Cornera*. The Venetian historian Marin Sanuto (1466-1536) wrote an enthusiastic report of the occasion, celebrating Fausto's revival of Greek science.[5] Thus, the *marina architectura* was born.[6]

According to Fausto, the *marina architectura* – naval architecture based on theoretical knowledge applied to shipbuilding practice – aimed to restore in the shipyard the ancient principles, just as they had been restored in terrestrial architecture. In a letter to his friend, the humanist Giovan Battista Ramusio, Fausto claimed that naval architecture had to be based on *litterae et disciplinae*, the 'knowledge' which came from the study of ancient works, the 'erudite letters'.[7] Indeed, Fausto stated:

> Architecture, above all, needs to be based on knowledge. Vitruvius said that architecture relies very little on craftsman's practice; Archimedes said that it requires such a deep knowledge that it is impossible to write an exhaustive essay about it. If learning terrestrial architecture is truly very difficult, what might we say about naval architecture in which each part (of the ship) is defined not by straight lines – which can be easily calculated – but by constantly varying curved lines?[8]

According to Fausto, 'naval architecture' does not require mere *fabrilis peritia*, 'craftsman's practice', but rather *architecturae professio*, 'the science of architecture', based on a shipbuilding principle that emanates from knowledge of

4 For a description of Fausto's *quinqueremis*, see: Casoni "Dei navigli poliremi", p. 17; Concina, *Navis*, p. 82; Jal, *Archéologie Navale*, 1, pp. 377-84; Jal, *Glossaire nautique*, p. 1248; Fincati, *Le trireme*, p. 57; Lane, *Venetian Ships*, pp. 59-65.

5 Sanuto, *I diarii* (hereafter Sanuto), L, column (hereafter col.) 347, ed. Fulin.

6 The phrase *marina architectura* was first used by Fausto in a letter dated 13 September 1530, and addressed to his friend Giovan Battista Ramusio, see Weber, *Virorum clarorum*, pp. 128-33.

7 Ibid.

8 Weber, *Virorum clarorum*, p. 130: *Imo vero nihil usquam est, quod maiorem literarum pene omnium cognitionem requirat quam architecturae profession, quipped cuius rurimam partem, que fabrili peritia continentur, Vitruvius esse contendat: Archimedes autem, tam multiplicis esse solertiae, ut ne scribe quidem de ea ad plenam posse existimet. Ac, si terrestrium aedificiarum difficilis admodum est architectura cognitio: quid de marina illa dicam, ubi non rectis lineis, qua facilis sere ratio est, set curvis, atque iis subinde variantibus, extruenda sunt omnia?*

Greek and Latin texts.[9] Fausto thought naval architecture, just as with terrestrial architecture, might similarly be improved through the imitation of ancient shipbuilders. During this period, traditional shipbuilding practices relied on empirical methods and the shipwrights' skill and experience.[10]

In sixteenth-century Italy, humanists like Fausto rediscovered the value of the Classical tradition and of Greek and Latin writers such as Vitruvius, Livy, Plato, and Cicero, who had previously fallen into obscurity.[11] The rebirth, or renaissance, of the Classical world produced a cultural and scientific revolution *ante litteram* that led medieval man into the Renaissance, which reached its highest achievement with the scientist Galileo Galilei.[12] In Venice, interest in Greek and Roman tradition stimulated a radical advancement in many fields, from art and literature to philosophy and architecture. Due to Fausto's work in the Arsenal, the influence of Classical culture effected great changes even in the traditional, empirical practices employed in shipbuilding. Fausto marked the distinction between the shipwright who built ships empirically by means of his expertise and keen eye, and the naval architect, who based his design on defined principles and methods. In order to establish Fausto's impact on the study of Renaissance naval architecture in Venice and beyond, it is worthwhile to delineate his fascinating yet hitherto poorly documented life and career.

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9 Weber, *Virorum clarorum*, p. 131.

10 Several studies have been devoted to empirical shipbuilding practices involving geometrical methods recorded in Venetian manuscripts. See for example: Anderson, "Italian Naval Architecture", pp. 135-63; Sarsfield, "Mediterranean Whole Molding", pp. 86-8, and Chiggiato, *Ragioni antique*. Recent studies include: Barker, 'Fragments', pp. 161-78; Rieth, "L'arquitectura naval", pp. 317-28; McManamon, "The Archeology", pp. 17-26; Alertz, "The Venetian Merchant Galley", pp. 212-21; Bondioli, "The Art of Designing", pp. 222-7; Castro, *The Pepper Wreck*, pp. 159-74; Castro, "Rising and Narrowing", pp. 148-54; Bondioli, "Early Shipbuilding Records", 3, pp. 243-80; McGee, "The Shipbuilding Text of Michael of Rhodes", 3, pp. 211-42.

11 Starthern, *The Medici*, pp. 81-90 and 172-97. For the revival of Latin and Greek literature in Venice, see Branca, *Umanesimo e Rinascimento*; Pertusi, "L'Umanesimo Greco;" Reynolds and Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*, pp. 137-42; Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of the Classical Antiquity*; Weiss, *Medieval and Humanist Greek*; Wilson, *From Byzantium to Italy*, pp. 124-57.

12 For a general overview of the Venetian Renaissance, see Butterfield, *The Origin of Modern Science*, pp. 103-17; Ergang, *The Renaissance*, pp. 45-56 and 111-4; Branca, *Umanesimo e Rinascimento*; Tafuri, *Venezia e il Rinascimento*; Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution*, pp. 10-23 and 82-96; Grendler, *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, p. 176.

Vettor Fausto, Professor of Greek and Naval Architect

Belonging to a modest family from Cephalonia, Fausto was a *civis Venetus originarius*.[13] The beginning of his humanistic career followed an arduous path since he was a parvenu of humble origins with few resources.[14] At the age of eighteen, Fausto became the pupil of Gerolamo Maserio from Forlì, who taught Greek at the School of Saint Mark from 1503 to 1509.[15] For Fausto, the apprenticeship under Maserio was very productive. Not only did Fausto make a living by copying rare Greek texts for his teacher, but, more importantly, he was introduced to the selective circle of Venetian humanists. He also published two Greek epigrams, one in the edition of Aulus Gellius' *Attic Nights* (1511), and the other in the *Grammaticae Institutiones* by Urbano Bolzanio (1443-1524).[16] The year of Maserio's departure in 1509 initiated quite a tumultuous period in the life of Fausto. During the war of the League of Cambrai, from 1509 to 1511, the School of Saint Mark remained closed and "public lectures were suspended for three years, with great shame and loss for everybody".[17] Deprived of Maserio's protection and in need of a job, Fausto started working as a Greek copyist for Aulo Giano Parrasio (1470-1522), a scholar from Calabria, who, however, left Venice a few months later, in 1510.[18] In 1511, Fausto became the pupil of the famous Cretan scholar Marcus Musurus (ca. 1470-1517), who had just been appointed to the lectureship of Greek at the School of Saint Mark after its reopening at the end of the War of the League of Cambrai.[19] In the same year, Fausto published in Venice a revised edition of the six comedies by Terence that also included *De comoedia libellus*, and some philosophical works by Cicero (*De officiis*, *De amicitia*, and *Paradoxa*), both printed by Lazaro de Soardi.[20]

13 Venice, Biblioteca del Museo Correr (hereafter BCVe), Cons. IX, d. 1-2, Cittadini veneziani, fol. 190r; ASVe, Senato Terra, reg. 20, fol. 159r; Sanuto, XXVI, col. 127; Pesaro, Biblioteca Oliveriana, Ms. Ol. 2019, fol. 15v; Simancas, Archivo General (hereafter AG), Catalogo XXVI, Papeles de Estado, Venecia, 1308, n. 110.

14 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. Vindob. Lat. 9737e, fols. 11r-v.

15 Fausto, *Orationes quinque*, pp. 2b-3a; see Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana (hereafter BNM), Aldine 359.

16 Venice, BNM, 123 D. 213 and Rari 678, respectively.

17 ASVe, Senato terra, reg. 17, fol. 117v.

18 Ms. Vindob. Lat. 9737e, fol. 11r-v. See also Gualdo Rosa, "Un decennio avventuroso", 25-36.

19 ASVe, Senato terra, reg. 17, fol. 118r.

20 Venice, BNM, 123 D. 213 and Rari 678, respectively.

In order to further the study of Greek, Fausto started travelling all over the Mediterranean.[21] In 1512 he was in Alcalá de Henares in Spain, working at the six-volume Complutensian Polyglot Bible, which was sponsored by the Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436-1517).[22] From 1513 to 1515, Fausto experienced military life under the mercenary captain Baldassare Scipione, commander of a squadron of knights in the army of the Venetian general Bartolomeo d'Alviano (1455-1515).[23] The year later, when the Venetian nobleman Giovanni Badoer (1465-1535) was appointed ambassador to France, Fausto became part of the diplomatic entourage.[24] Fausto lived in France for about two years and, in 1517, he published the first Latin translation of Aristotle's *Mechanics*.[25] Undoubtedly, the *Aristotelis Mechanica* is Fausto's most outstanding, impressive literary work, as he made Aristotle's treatise available in Latin for the first time in the Western world. During the Renaissance, few people could master Greek, and considering the difficulty of the text and its technical vocabulary, few humanists could undertake such a difficult task. The *Mechanics*, along with other Greek sources, was a fundamental and formative text for Fausto in the conception of his *quinqueremis*. Fausto's authorship greatly contributed to the restoration of Greek science in the Western world and inaugurated a new field of study devoted to mechanical questions. It also enacted a cultural process that gradually led to the legitimization of the *artes mechanicae*, paving the way for the scientific revolution started by Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), who lectured at the University of Padua on Aristotle's work and wrote a lost commentary on it.

In 1518, Fausto, desiring to apply his new knowledge to the service of the Republic, returned to Venice.[26] It was during this period that the city of Ragusa in Dalmatia offered Fausto a Greek lectureship, which he refused since a better opportunity had arisen.[27] In 1518, Marcus Musurus, who held the chair of Greek at the School of Saint Mark, had died in Rome, leaving the position vacant. In June 1518, the Venetian senators decreed to appoint a new professor to replace Marcus Musurus, and the candidates were required to deliver public lectures in Greek.[28] On 4 October 1518, Fausto lectured on *De laudibus patriae* by Lucian

21 Fausto, *Orationes quinque*, p. 3a.

22 On the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, see the study of Revilla Rico, *La Políglota de Alcalá*, and Lyell, *Cardinal Ximenes*.

23 Fausto, *Aristotelis Mechanica*, p. 1a and 3b.

24 Sanuto, XXVI, col. 52.

25 Venice, BNM, Miscellanea 2983.

26 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, reg. 1, folios not numbered.

27 Fausto, *Orationes quinque*, pp. 7a-b and 36a.

28 ASVe, Senato terra, reg. 20, fol. 132v. See also Sanuto, XXVI, col. 502-3, and XXV, col. 120.

and on 8 October, he lectured on the *Argonautica* by Apollonius Rhodius.[29] A week later, the senators appointed Fausto as Professor of Greek at the School of Saint Mark.[30] In this period, however, Fausto had already begun to work on the *quinqueremis*, at least on a theoretical level. He formally presented his project to the Arsenal in 1525,[31] and in the following years built several other ships. In 1530, Fausto was appointed librarian of the repository that became the modern Marciana Library, which housed the valuable collection of Cardinal Bessarion (1403-72).[32]

The year 1539 was an *annus horribilis* for Fausto, as he was arrested, incarcerated, and tortured under the charge of treachery and conspiracy against the Republic.[33] A cyphered letter sent by the Spanish ambassadors to Charles V (1500-58) reported that Fausto arranged to move to France at the service of the House of Valois in order to build galleasses and other ships. Rumors that Fausto was secretly murdered started spreading.[34] Although he was released soon afterwards and declared innocent, the Republic's suspicion was not completely groundless. As far back as 1530, the French ambassador in Venice Lazare de Baïf (1496-1547), on behalf of King Francis I (1494-1547), negotiated with Fausto regarding the prospect of moving to France.[35] De Baïf's mediation probably failed, because in the same year Fausto was appointed librarian to the Library of Saint Mark. After a series of delusions related to his work at the Arsenal, Fausto was frustrated and in July 1546, he contacted the Florentine ambassador in Venice and negotiated the possibility of moving to Tuscany and working at the service of the Medici, but nothing materialized.[36] At this time, Fausto was working on a re-edition of his translation of Aristotle's *Mechanichs*, which was enriched by a more detailed visual and exegetical apparatus.[37] Unfortunately, this work never came to light. He died toward the end of 1546 at the age of 56 with no children, leaving few belongings to his sister Apollonia.[38]

29 Sanuto, XXVI, col. 52, and col. 107-8.

30 ASVe, Senato terra, reg. 20, fol. 159v.

31 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, reg. 1, fol. 31r.

32 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Comuni, reg. 5, fols. 39v-40r.

33 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Criminali, filza 8, 29 November 1539; ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Criminali, reg. 5, fol. 98v, and 99v.

34 Simancas, AG, Catalogo XXVI, Papales de Estado, Venecia, 67, fol. 34v.

35 Marchegay, "Lazare de Baïf", pp. 378-9.

36 Florence, Archivio di Stato, Fondo Mediceo del Principato, 2967, fol. 188r.

37 Fausto, *Orationes quinque*, p. 5a.

38 ASVe, Collegio, Notatorio, reg. 26, c. 51r, and ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Comuni, filza 27, document attached to document 257 (23 May 1540).

The Proposal of Building the Quinquereme

On the afternoon of 15 August 1525, Fausto was admitted to the Ducal Palace for an audience with the Doge Andrea Gritti. Fausto proposed to the Venetian Republic to construct a quinquereme that he himself designed. Unfortunately, none of Fausto's drawings have survived, and the only recorded reference to this is in *I Diarii* by the Venetian historian Marin Sanuto. Sanuto narrated the circumstances of the event as follows:

> Vetor [*sic*] Fausto, who is lecturing in Greek in this city, came to the Doge, and showed a wonderful model for building a galley that was rowed with five oars per bench, while the light galley is rowed with only three [oars], and he showed the rowing system. Thus, the decision was entrusted to the College.[39]

For the maritime history of Venice, Fausto represents uniqueness, as he was the first and the only humanist in Venice who was interested in naval architecture and who proposed to the Republic a project for building a special ship. Despite the fact that Fausto could rely on the support and protection of influential politicians, his proposal did not receive immediate acceptance; the Senators discussed Fausto's proposal for nearly a year.

On 17 September 1525, the Senators and the Doge held a meeting to discuss Fausto's proposal.[40] However, the Venetian senators invited the Patrons of the Arsenal and the master shipbuilders who were encouraged to participate in the discussion regarding the technical aspects of the quinquereme. Sanuto wrote:

> The Doge and the Senators met in the saloon of the College where proposals are presented with the participation of the Sages, and they evaluated the model of the five-oared galley designed by Vetor Fausto, who lectures in Greek in this city, at Terranova, with public salary. There were also Lunardo Emo, Superintendent of the Arsenal, and Antonio da Pexaro, Patron [of the Arsenal], since the others were not in Venice; [there were also] Lunardo and Mathio Brexan, and other master shipbuilders of the galleys in the Arsenal, and they discussed for a long time.

39 Sanuto, XXXIX, col. 322: *Vene dal Serenissimo Vetor Fausto leze in greco in questa terra, e monstrò uno belissimo modello di far una galia qual vogerà 5 remi per bano, che le sotil vuoga solum 3, et qui monstrò il modo; sichè lo rimesse ad aldirlo in Collegio*.

40 Sanuto, XXXIX, col. 440.

> [Lunardo] Brexan praised [the model], whilst [Mathio] Brexan condemned it.[41]

The debate about the technical aspects of the quinquereme, and especially about the rowing system, was highly pitched. The Senate was inclined to believe the opinion of Lunardo Brexan (1498-1540), a skilled shipwright. Toward the end of the fifteenth century he had built a heavy *barze* of 1,200 tons, the first of the great round ships that sailed from the Venetian Arsenal for military purposes.[42] However, on 23 September 1525, a few days after the meeting with the naval architecture experts of the Arsenal, the Senate deliberated a proposal in favor of Fausto's project of building a quinquereme:

> Our faithful Venetian *dominus* Vetor [*sic*] Fausto has been here, in our presence, and he had presented a model of a quinquereme, which is rowed by five oars per bench, and it has been examined and discussed by our master shipbuilders from the Arsenal. It would be beneficial to have in our Arsenal a ship for the safety of our overseas dominions, such as that of the quinquereme, and [it would be beneficial] also to hire the above mentioned *dominus* Vetor for our service. On the authority of this Council, it is proposed that the Superintends and the Patrons of the Arsenal provide [Fausto] with a ship-shed in which to build the above mentioned quinquereme, and with all the necessities in order to accomplish it. Furthermore, [it is proposed] that our ambassador in Rome ask the Blessed Pope to satisfy our request of 500 ducats of income for the above mentioned *dominus* Vetor [*sic*] as a favor from the Knights of Rhodes, since he had no such income. Moreover, in the event that this request is accepted, the above mentioned Vetor Fausto is bound to produce the rowing system of the quinquereme and to demonstrate it to the Superintends and Patrons of the Arsenal, and to the master shipbuilders. Once the quinquereme is approved by our experts, [Fausto] can start building his quinquereme and complete it. Furthermore, it is proposed that, while *dominus* Vetor [*sic*] is waiting for the above mentioned

41 Sanuto, XXXIX, col. 440: *Il Serenissimo con la Signoria si ridusse in Collegio in sala dove s fa il Pregadi con i Savii, et veteno il modello di la galia di 5 remi fatto per Vetor fausto, leze in greco in questa terra in Terranova a salario pubblivo. Era etiam sier Lunardo Emo proveditor a l'Arsenal e sier Antonio da Pexaro patron, perchè li altri è andati fuora; Lunardo e Mathio Brexan e altri prothi di galie di l'Arsenal, e quì fo parlato assai.Brexan laudava et Brexan biasemava.*

42 Lane, *Venetian Ships*, p. 50.

> benefit, he will have for his sustenance the yearly amount of 100 ducats, which he no longer will be given upon receiving the above mentioned income. These provisions will be effective from the day in which the above mentioned quinquereme is completed, fully armed, and shown that the rowing system works, upon which it will be praised and approved. Finally, *dominus* Vetor [*sic*] will be allowed to carry arms and to hire a guard for his safety and protection, as he has rightly requested.[43]

The Senate voted twice on this deliberation. Of the 25 Senators present at the Council, 16 voted in favor (*de parte*), eight voted against Fausto's proposal (*de non*), and one voted *non sinceri*, literally "not sincere", meaning that the Senator was not able to make an educated vote, or abstained. Unfortunately, the deliberation failed since Venetian legislation required a senatorial decree to secure three quarters of the votes for approval. Basically, the majority of the Senators favored Fausto, but the decree did not pass for being one vote short.

On 17 January 1526, the Senators invited Fausto to speak a second time. Sanuto recorded that Fausto talked for a long time praising his quinquereme. He claimed that it would be "the mistress of the seas" for its seaworthiness and for the great advantage and prestige that the Republic would gain from its construction.[44] But among the senators, skepticism and dubiousness that a man of letters could succeed in building a ship had been spread by the incredulous shipwrights. The master shipbuilders' main concern was the *alla sensile* rowing system of the quinquereme. It consisted of five rowers per bench, each with an oar. From the end of the thirteenth century to the middle of the sixteenth century the standard Venetian galleys were triremes (light galleys), developed from the Byzantine bireme in 1290.[45] The triremes were single-banked ships with 25 or 30 benches on either side and three rowers per bench, each pulling a separate oar.[46] The benches (or thwarts) were arranged obliquely to form an acute angle with the longitudinal gangway (or *corsia*) of the ship, so that the inboard extremity of each bench was positioned farther toward the bow than the outboard end. Thus, the three rowers, sitting on the same bench and each pulling his own oar, did not interfere with one another during rowing. Baldissera Quintio Drachio, in his *Vision* (1594), referred to a light galley with 24 benches, each arranged obliquely (*sbiasso*) towards the bow by 28 *dita*, that

43 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, fol. 31r. See APPENDIX, doc. 1.

44 Sanuto, XL, col. 123.

45 Sanuto the Elder, *Liber secretorum*, 57.

46 Jal, *Glossaire nautique*, pp. 749 and 752; Fincati, *Le triremi*, p. 22.

is to say 60.85 cm.[47] Although ancient texts on naval warfare such as *De re militari* by the Late Roman writer Vegetius mention multi-banked galleys, during the Renaissance the oars of the Mediterranean warship were arranged on a single level. In Venice, both the light galley and the great galley were single-banked ships. Neither the latter nor the former were rowed by more than three oars per bench. Thus, the project proposed by Vettor Fausto of building a quinquereme rowed by five rowers on a single bench, each pulling a separate oar, must have appeared revolutionary, if not visionary. For this reason, the Senators left any decisions concerning the construction of the quinquereme pending and resolved not to vote for an official decree.

On 23 May 1526 Fausto again presented before the Senators of the Council of Ten. He read his request (*suplica*) for building his quinquereme reported as follows:

> Most Serene Doge,
>
> Since I, Vetor [*sic*] Fausto, see that your affairs are such that they do not permit you either to solve my case or to vote in my favor, as it has been promised to me, I believe it would not be inconvenient if I remind by this speech I wrote to Your Sublimity and to the most Excellent Lords [of this Council] my request. Consider, please, that it is almost seven years since I have returned to this city, and I was extremely pleased to be appointed professor of Greek, even though I received only half of the salary I could have received from the Lucchesi and from the Ragusans, as it is indicated in public documents. But I was willing to show to Your Sublimity all the knowledge I gained after many labors, perils, and hard work all over the world. Indeed, I became acquainted with several seamen of different countries, namely Catalans, Provencales, Normans, Biscaynes, Genoese, and others; and I have visited several maritime cities in Spain, France, Italy, and in other [countries], and I have spoken with many Sea Captains, among which were Piero Navarro, Pier Jam Bassà, the Gobbo from Dalmatia, and Doria; and I have spoken with the master shipbuilders of Naples, Genoa, and Pisa; and, therefore, I found out that the quinquereme, which was the great and fast galley that the Romans used in naval warfare, would be the mistress of the sea and it would defeat any other ship, since it is extremely seaworthy and could withstand any sort of weather. Thus, I myself designed the quinquereme according to the measurements I found in the most ancient Greek texts, and, successively, I came

47 Drachio, *Visione*, in ASVe, Archivio Proprio Contarini, busta 25.

before this Council and presented my project to you, most Excellent Lords, and to the master shipbuilders of the Arsenal. I clearly stated that my quinquereme could have carried one cannon of more than 15 *miara*, in addition to the smaller ones, and that, at the bow, it could have hurled a 100 *libbre* iron [ball], which would be easily capable of sinking any armed ship. Furthermore, since my quinquereme would be quite huge, it could be laid at anchor offshore together with the other large ships. Moreover, my quinquereme would be a great advantage during naval warfare: thanks to its design and to the number of oars, it would sail as fast as the light galleys. I assert that my quinquereme will have all these features and will confirm this claim. Indeed, [also] the master shipbuilders of the Arsenal of Your Sublimity, after they carefully evaluated the proportions of my quinquereme, said that the ship would confirm the above mentioned claims and it would be fast, when provided with the rowing system I have designed consisting of the [five] oars pulled together at the same time. However, [the master shipbuilders] said that they are unable to build and to set in motion [the rowing system] of my quinquereme. Therefore, I proposed to build it on my own, so that I could demonstrate how the fifth oar [on a quinquereme] would row better than the third [oar on a trireme] does at the present [on the other galleys], on condition that Your Sublimity would ask the Pope – since my quinquereme would be beneficial to all the Christian world – to provide me with a salary of 500 ducats from the Confraternity [of the Knights] of Rhodes, and, in the meantime, Your Sublimity would provide me with an income of 150 ducats per year. Although Your Sublimity and the most Excellent Lords appeared to promptly approve my project, nonetheless any judgement has not been pronounced so far. However, since I know that Your Sublimity has the intention to build new warships in order to defeat the Western corsairs, and has in mind to build a new fleet regardless of the expenses, I present again my quinquereme that will confirm all the above claims, which, neither light galleys (*galee sottili*), small galleys (*galeotte*), great galleys (*galee grosse*), nor large galleys (*galee bastarde*) can achieve, as they cannot sail with the wind. And I assert that I will demonstrate the rowing system, in which five men pulling the oars together at the same time would row better than the three men on light galleys. In the case my quinquereme will not be approved by the expert [master ship builders], and in case Your Sublimity will not experience the truth of what I am asserting, then, I will forego any reward. To set things straight, since the construction of the hull of my quinquereme involves great expenses, Your Sublimity should provide me with a great galley

> from his Arsenal, so that I may arrange on it the rowing system according to its cargo capacity based on the height of the depth in the hold. So, Your Sublimity will see the great advantage of my quinquereme, although not yet built, but still Your Sublimity will realize, either way, what the final result of one of my quinqueremes would be when completely realized with all its proportions. Then, Your Sublimity will decide, at his discretion, whether I deserve a reward or not, based on my innovations, which, I hope, will be wonderful and great. These are, Most Serene Doge and Excellent Lords, the things that a humble servant has been trying to acquaint himself with all over the world, thanks also to the ancient Greek and Roman texts. And now I offer to Your Sublimity my knowledge, which will confer to this rich city great prestige, benefit, and safety. It should not be that you, Excellent Lords, who are considered the wisest all over the world and the most expert in naval warfare, despise me, such a humble servant, and disregard my project, since very few quinqueremes would suffice to ruin any enemy's fleet. Therefore, with great deference, I request what I am asking will be fulfilled, and that one of my servants and I be allowed to carry arms, for the reasons that Your Sublimity well knows.[48]

Fausto's proposal of testing the rowing system first on a great galley must have motivated the Lords of the Council to reexamine Fausto's project. With the official decree dated to 23 May 1526, the members of the Council of Ten decided "… that the request *dominus* Vetor Fausto has just read for building a quinquereme has to be examined by the Council of the *Pregadi* in order to vote on Fausto's petition".[49] On 30 July 1526 the Council again discussed Fausto's request. A few weeks later on 22 September 1526 the proposal of building a quinquereme finally arrived in the hands of the Venetian senators.[50] A document from the Correr Museum from the end of the sixteenth century recorded that "many master shipbuilders were opposed to the proposal of the audacious shipbuilder, but the senator Bernardo Navagero spoke in favor of Fausto at the presence of the members of the Senate and supported him against his detractors".[51] Finally, the Senate accepted and approved Fausto's request:

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48 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, folios not numbered; see APPENDIX, doc. 2.

49 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, fol. 62r; see APPENDIX, doc. 3.

50 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti comuni, reg. 2, fol. 51v; Patroni e Provveditori all'Arsenal, filza 7, fol. 64r; Collegio, Notatorio, reg. 7, fol. 93r.

51 Venice, BCVe, Ms. Gradenigo 170, fol. 66r: *Alcuni proti dell'arsenale furono contrarii al valoroso fabbbricatore, la il senatore Bernardo Navagero diffese il Fausto nel Senato e prese la protezione di lui a fronte degli avversari.*

> The [members] of this Council have listened to the proposal of building a quinquereme by our humble servant Vetor Fausto. Our master shipbuilders have examined carefully the design [of the ship] and it has been approved. However, there is still some doubt concerning its rowing system which inevitably has to be tested prior to its construction. If the rowing system is successful, it would greatly increase both the good reputation and the safety of our city. Therefore, it has been decided that the above mentioned Vetor has to come before this Council and demonstrate the oar mechanics of his quinquereme in the presence of the Most Serene Doge and the experts to be selected by the members of the Council. In the event the rowing system is proven to work, the Patrons of our Arsenal will immediately have to provide him with a ship-shed, which has to be locked up in order to permit entrance only to the shipwrights selected to build the quinquereme. Moreover, [it has been decided] to provide Fausto with all the necessities, such as workers, wood, and supplies he will need in order to build his quinquereme without further delay. Conversely, if the Council realizes that the [demonstration of the] rowing system is not doable, then a great galley (*galia bastarda*) from our Arsenal should be allocated to Fausto, so that he can adapt the oars on this great galley and demonstrate the rowing system he invented. The Patrons [of the Arsenal] have to provide him, therefore, with all the necessities Fausto asks, in order to avoid any delay in the construction. Once the rowing system [on the great galley] is proven to work and to be effective, then, a ship-shed to build the quinquereme should be immediately assigned to Fausto. In order to properly reward his work, which is so important for the reputation of our State, it has been decided that [Fausto] will receive his reward.[52]

A practical demonstration of how "the five men pulling the oars together at the same time would row better than three men on the light galleys"[53] was the *conditio sine qua non* for the construction of the quinquereme. Unfortunately, records about the circumstances of the demonstration of the rowing system do not exist and it remains unknown whether Fausto ever adapted five oars to the hull of a great galley. Nevertheless, it seems that Fausto convinced the master shipbuilders of the Arsenal. Indeed, a few weeks later in October 1526 Fausto started the construction of his quinquereme, working alongside shipwrights in

52 Sanuto, XLII, col. 765-6; see also APPENDIX, doc. 4

53 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, folios not numbered; see APPENDIXI, doc. 2.

the Arsenal.[54] The construction of the quinquereme in the Venetian Arsenal lasted almost three years. Likely, the ship-shed assigned to Fausto was located in the *Arsenale Novissimo*, "the most recent area" added to the existing Arsenal in 1475.[55] The construction of the hull of the quinquereme and its upper structures was completed in the first days of 1529. On the morning of 11 January 1529,

> The Most Serene Doge, wearing a garment of velvet and a coat on his shoulders, went to the Arsenal, together with all the members of the College, about ten Procurators, and ten other Senators who were in saint Mark's square and had been invited, among whom were *sier* Andrea Mudazo and *sier* Piero Lando, who were the Superintends of the Arsenal. [The Most Serene Doge] made his entrance through the New Arsenal, and there he saw the ships (*barze*) that were being built, one of which was almost completed. He also saw the quinquereme built by Vettor Fausto, who was there and explained all the shipbuilding sequence, and stated that it was accomplished.[56]

The construction of the quinquereme completely absorbed Vettor Fausto. Moreover, considering that Fausto was not a skilled shipwright, building a ship for the first time *ex novo* would have been a demanding task. In a long letter written to his friend Giovan Battista Ramusio, and dated to 13 September 1530, Fausto compared the days of his intense work at the Arsenal to Heracles' descent into the Underworld:

> I have arrived at the place where the Venetians build their ships, which is almost like Acheron. And I came there through a difficult and abysmal path, though a cave with huge and pointed stones hanging from the ceiling where there is constantly the thick darkness of Hades, as the poet said with slightly different words. When the past year, with hard work, I achieved the same fame that Hercules achieved – if I may compare myself to the ancients – at the moment when he arrived in Hades. Hercules, however, was at least accompanied by Theseus, who helped him to escape the jaws of the terrible Cerberus, and eventually [Hercules] succeeded in returning to world to see light again. I, instead, was completely left alone, and although I do not owe anything to anyone, no one

54 Sanuto, XXVI, col. 52, 107, 127; XXXVII, col. 195.

55 On the Arsenal of Venice, see the studies by Concina, *L'Arsenale*; Concina, "La casa dell'Arsenale" and also Aymard, "L'arsenal de Venise", pp. 407-18.

56 Sanuto, XLIX, col. 357; see APPENDIX, doc. 5.

> helped me, and I had to fight alone against the ignorance and the ill will of Cerberus, so to speak.[57]

Fausto's metaphor not only likens his hard work to that of the labors of Heracles but, most of all it is an explicit reference to "the ignorance and the ill will" of the conservative, Venetian master shipbuilders who employed traditional shipbuilding practices.

Remarkably, Fausto's quinquereme became famous even before it was launched. On 31 March 1526 Giovanni Contarini, known as *Cazadiavoli* ("Devil Chaser"), wrote a letter from the harbor of Trani to Lunardo Emo, the Superintendent of the Arsenal. In the letter, Contarini "asked to send [to Trani] the quinquereme that had been built by Vettor Fausto in the Arsenal, and said that, sailing onboard the quinquereme, he could achieve great deeds, and defeat four galleys of Andrea Doria".[58] However, the quinquereme remained unarmed and yet to be outfitted. Less than a month later, on 28 April 1526, "in the Arsenal, it was launched. The quinquereme had been built by Vetor Fausto, who designed it and who is [also] a professor of Greek …, however, most of the people believe that [the quinquereme] would be a failure. They said that on 6 May, on the day of the *Sensa* Feast, [the quinquereme] will take part in the parade on the Canal together with the Bucentaur".[59] Apparently, however, the quinquereme did not take part in this important Venetian festivity, for it was not yet ready.

The first official ceremony occurred on 21 May 1526. The historian Sanuto, who was present at the parade and saw the quinquereme from Saint Anthony, on the Lido di Jesolo, between Venice and Chioggia, recorded the following:

> This morning, the quinquereme was launched in the Arsenal; [onboard] there were the rowers of the ferry-boats, and *sier* Alvise Sagredo, Patron of the Arsenal, was the captain. [The quinquereme] sailed up to Chioggia, as if it was vaulting.… It was armed with its full load of artillery to make it steady on the water, and it had also a culverin weighting … on the bow, the captain was *sier* Alsive Sagredo, Patron of the Arsenal, and Vettor

57 Weber, *Virorum clarorum*, pp. 129-30.

58 Sanuto, L, col. 147: *Fu letto una lettera di sier Zuan Contarini, Cazadiavoli sopraditto, proveditor di l'armata, di Trani, di ultimo, scritta a sier Lunardo Emo el consier. Supplica li sia mandà la galia quinqueremes fatta far per Vettor Fausto in l'Arsenal, con la qual promette far gran cose e prendere 4 galie di Andrea Doria.*

59 Sanuto, L, col. 227: *in l'Arsenal, fo varato la galia quinqueremes, fata per Vetor Fausto, leze in greco, zoè datoli il sesto … ma per iuditio de la più parte non reuscirà. Se dice il Zuoba di la Sensa, che sarà a dì 6 Mazo, sarà vogata per canal insieme con il bucintoro.*

> Fausto, who designed the ship, was the admiral … there was also the crew … the quinquereme was escorted by the galley of *sier* Agustin da Mula, who had been the Proveditor to the Fleet, and, together with the noblemen, [the quinquereme] sailed up to Saint Anthony, where I was standing and had the occasion to admire it. I saw that the rowers were rowing together in unison, and then the ship saluted Saint Anthony three times, as it was the custom, and then it turned and sailed back very fast, and arrived at Saint George Major, and, there, it also saluted, and then it arrived in front of Saint Mark.[60]

Among the crew there were the professional rowers in the galley of Francesco Bondumier, "who just arrived in Venice from Istria, and he wants a new galley, and his crew temporarily went aboard the quinquereme".[61] Amid general skepticism, the quinquereme had been launched, but the Doge and the Superintendents and Patrons of the Arsenal were still concerned about its speed. Therefore, it was decided to test the quinquereme in a race with a light galley, and to determine whether the great size and heavy armament compromised the claimed qualities of the quinquereme. The race against the light galley *Cornera* was held on 23 May off of the island of Lido, just two days after the quinquereme's launching in the Canal. Sanuto wrote an enthusiastic report celebrating Fausto for this revival of Greek science:

> After lunch, since today was the day fixed for testing the rowing system of the quinquereme, the latter, together with the light galley under captain *sier* Marco Corner, son of *sier* Piero from Saint Marguerite, sailed toward Malamoco, the starting point [of the race] from where they would have begun the race, rowing against one another to see who would have been the faster. Therefore, after vespers His Serenity invited all the ambassadors, except those from Urbino and Mantua, and with their boats and accompanied by many nobles, among which was *sier* Vetor Morexini, they went to the castle called *Castel Nuovo*, where seats had been prepared under a cover from the sun. And there were an infinite number of boats outside the two castles and throughout the Canal … and many people from Padua and from Chioggia aboard many ships, and today some gondolas have been paid eight or ten *lire* just to see such a thing. I saw

60 Sanuto, L, col. 345-46; see APPENDIX, doc. 6.

61 Sanuto, L, col. 343: *Gionse la galia soracomito sier Francesco Bondimier in questa terra hozi, la qual era in Istria, venuto a cambiar la galia, et la zurma si adopererà sopra la galia quinquereme*.

> many ladies in boats, and the Procurators, and finally the Most Reverend Cardinal Pisani with the Archbishop of Nicosia and with D. Lippomano from Padua. Now, at the fixed hour, when the signal was given, the said galleys came rowing, racing one against the other, and in front rowed the [light galley] *Cornera*, but when they had almost arrived at the castles, the quinquereme was on the outside, and the *Cornera* hugged the land so close that the quinquereme passed it in front of His Serenity and so came ahead, rowing as far as Saint Mark, with so many boats in the Canal, and sails of large barks and fishing boats that it seemed like an armada. It was most beautiful to see. This quinquereme has great power in its oars, but the benches are a little more angled compared to those of the other light galleys, so that Vetor Fausto, the author who designed it, will be immortal".[62]

The race between the quinquereme and the galley *Cornera* is echoed in a letter dated 29 May 1529, which was written by Pietro Bembo (1470-1547) and addressed to Giovan Battista Ramusio (1485-1557):

> I was extremely glad to read the good news you wrote me in your past exultant and joyful letter about the success and victory of our Fausto, and about his quinquereme that has been recovered from ancient times and that won the race against the trireme, at the presence of the Most Serene Prince of the Senate, and the entire city of Venice. I received this news last night … I first read [the letter in which you wrote] that the two ships were racing at the same height, sailing in front of the Doge, and that the trireme sometimes passed the quinquereme a little. Then I read your second letter in which you told how Fausto, standing in the middle of the quinquereme, encouraged his rowers to show their virtue, and that, in doing so, he passed the trireme that seemed [immobile] as a rock so quickly that it seemed to everybody a marvelous thing [to see]. I was exulted with happiness you gave me with this news. My happiness doubled in my soul when, slightly later, I read that the Doge, who was hoping that that Fausto would win, was not able to retain his tears from happiness when he saw that his wish came true … Oh, my dear Fausto, how happy you must have been when such a high personality [the Doge], so old and affected by infirmity, cried for he was deeply touched by your victory.[63]

62 Sanuto, L, col. 363; see APPENDIX, doc. 7.

63 Bembo, letter n. 975, ed. Travi, *Lettere di Pietro Bembo*, 3, p. 45; see APPENDIX, doc. 8.

The Naval Career of Vettor Fausto's Quinquereme

After launching, Fausto's quinquereme was immediately sent to Greece to protect Venice's overseas dominions (*dominio da mar*). On 29 June 1529, the Proveditor to the Fleet Michiel Morosini spoke in front of the senators about the urgency of reorganizing the Venetian fleet since the Holy Roman Emperor was approaching with his navy to the coasts of France.[64] Morosini exhorted the Council to finance, to the sum of 15,000 ducats, the Venetian fleet that had just left sailing toward Greece.[65] The Sages of the Council, at first reluctant to devote such a huge amount of money to naval warfare, immediately agreed with Morosini's proposal when they received news that "the Emperor arrived in Monaco, which is dangerously close to Genoa. Thus, in accordance with the Council, yesterday, we have already sent the quinquereme to the Captain of Sea, and we have sent him a letter."[66]

Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro was elected Admiral of the Fleet on 10 June 1529. He was an experienced seafarer and had previously been Captain of the Flanders galleys. The Sages of the Council established that Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro had to outfit five light galleys, whose commanders (*soracomiti*) would have been *sier* Zuan Francesco Donado, *sier* Almorò Barbaro, *sier* David Bembo, *sier* Zuan Battista Zorzi, and *sier* Bernardo Sagredo.[67] However, given the serious threat of Charles V stationing in France, the Great Council added seven more commanders to those already elected.[68]

On 18 June 1529 the Senate urged Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro to leave immediately with his fleet, "since we received the news that [Andrea] Doria, who is at the service of Caesar, sailed from Genoa to Barcelona with his galleys and ships. Therefore, we should expect that His Majesty will arrive in Italy soon, and we have to be prepared for this eventuality."[69] The Venetian fleet's departure was fixed for the 27th of June. A few days before, on 24 June, the Senate elected Gerolamo da Canal, previously the Captain of the Gulf, as the Captain of the quinquereme.[70] The Senate, given the urgency of the situation, decreed at the very last moment, "without filing any formal request [to the Council] …

64 Sanuto, L, col. 568.

65 ASVe, Senato mar, reg. 21, fol. 141v.

66 Sanuto, LI, col. 286: *Fu posto, per i Savi tutti, una lettera al Capitanio zeneral di mar. Come havendo hauto nova del zonzer di l'imperador a Monaco vicino Zenoa, però col Senato li scrivemo haver expedito heri la galia quinquereme*.

67 Sanuto, LI, col. 462 and 464.

68 Sanuto, LI, col. 483.

69 ASVe, Senato mar, reg. 21, fol. 141v; Sanuto, LI, col. 506.

70 Sanuto, L, col. 544 and 545.

that also Gerolamo da Canal, captain of the quinquereme, would have left soon".[71]

The historian Sanuto described the preparations of the expedition. On 26 June, the galley of Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro was brought to Saint Mark in order to gild its poop, and during the previous night, by means of huge rollers, the galley was pulled up on shallow waters and put on land. Finally, the galley was adorned with flags, and had a beautiful lantern and other decorations.[72] Sanuto also described the departure ceremony. On the morning of 27 June the Admiral Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro accompanied by the Doge, the Senators, noblemen, the procurators, the foreign ambassadors living in Venice, and the commanders of the light galleys, gathered in the Church of Saint Mark for the solemn mass and blessing of the banner depicting the lion of the patron of the Republic of Venice. However, da Canal "while the mass continued, left the church and went to set the benches to his galley, accompanied by Michel Morosini and Zuan Moro, Proveditors of the fleet, and by the other commanders, and then, he went back to the mass".[73] Evidently, Gerolamo da Canal wanted to leave with the Venetian fleet and "wanted to arm and outfit [the quinquereme] now, but the hemp to make the ropes had not yet arrived, and it should have on 20 July".[74]

The quinquereme, however, was further delayed in its departure and left on 1 August 1529. That morning, the quinquereme slowly left the Arsenal and arrived at the Bridge of the Straw, next to the Doge's Palace, where the enlistment of the rowers would take place. The presence in Venice of a group of Spanish refugees from Istria was providential. The College immediately enlisted them among the rowers of the quinquereme.[75] It seems that one of the main problems of the quinquereme was gathering 280 oarsmen needed to fill the 28 benches running on either side of the ship. Around mid-August, Gerolamo da Canal departed from Venice. On 10 September 1529, while sailing along the coast of Dalmatia, he wrote a letter to the Senate complaining that "he was not able to find enough rowers, he could not find available men, and

71 Sanuto, L, col. 560: *Et etiam, senza meter altra parte per il Collegio, fo terminà che sier Hironimo da Canal, governador de la quinqueremi, etiam lui mettesse banco*.

72 Sanuto, L, col. 560.

73 Sanuto, L, col. 561: *Digandose la messa, sier Hironimo da Canal governador di la quinqueremi, in mezo di sier Michiel Morexini et sier Zuan Moro proveditori sora l'armar, acompagnato da procuratori, tutti li soracomiti, andò a meter banco, poi tornò in chiexia*.

74 Sanuto, L, col. 566: *El qual Canal voria armar adesso … perchè non è li canevi zonti, nè saranno fino 20 lujo, da far corde.*

75 Sanuto, LI, col. 222.

that he had only one hundred men, and he needed [more]".[76] On 19 November the quinquereme arrived in the harbor of Corfu, where it joined the Venetian fleet of the Admiral Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro.[77] The Admiral in charge of faithfully reporting to the Venetian Senate all important matters pertaining to the naval expedition wrote a letter to the Senate saying that the quinquereme needed 40 more rowers.[78]

In the meantime, at the request of the Senate, Fausto had built two more quinqueremes in the Arsenal of Venice. The two new ships, named *Zorzi* and *Bemba*, were sent to join the fleet of Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro. They were assigned to Zuan Battista Zorzi and to David Bembo, respectively.[79] Both arrived in Corfu towards the end of November, slightly after the quinquereme of Gerolamo da Canal. The Admiral recorded in his letter to the Senate that *Bemba* was missing ten rowers.[80]

Soon afterwards the Senate ordered Admiral Gerolamo da Ca' Pesaro to return to Venice and disarm the galleys, "except those that were in Cyprus, that is to say [the quinquereme] of the Captain Gerolamo da Canal, and ten galleys".[81] At the same time, the Senate allowed the Captain to transfer to his quinquereme the rowers from the ten light galleys that were also in Cyprus. The Senate's decision to recall and disarm the fleet resulted from the peace concluded on 14 October 1529 by Suleiman I and the Holy Roman Empire.[82]

News of the peace arrived in Venice on 29 December, when the Ottoman ambassador docked his ship in front of Saint Mark's square and was welcomed by Venetian noblemen and former *bailo* to the Sublime Porte. On the same day, the Senate ratified the peace treaty and ordered the Venetian fleet to return to Venice, leaving the quinquereme behind in Cyprus.[83] This decision flamed discussion among the senators and did not meet the approval of a group of patricians, who wanted to keep in Cyprus "the new and well-designed galleys" that had been recently armed at the Arsenal.[84] Therefore, the Senate decreed

76 Sanuto, LI, col. 516: *Come non pol interzar la galia, non trova homini, ha solum 100, et ne bisogna.*

77 Sanuto, LII, col. 346.

78 Ibid.

79 Sanuto, LI, col. 286.

80 Sanuto, LII, col. 346.

81 Sanuto, LII, col. 393: *Exceto do sono in Cipro, il governator di la quinquereme, con 10 galie.*

82 ASVe, Senato mar, reg. 21, fol. 161v.

83 Sanuto (LII, col. 100-2) provides a list of all the Venetian galleys, with their corresponding captains who came back to Venice, or were about to, in order to be disarmed.

84 Sanuto, LII, col. 393.

that ten light galleys had to remain in service in Cyprus in order to better protect the Republic's *Stato da mar*.[85]

From the senatorial decree, we learn that the oarsmen of the ten light galleys, if needed, could have served on board the quinquereme. However, during the first days of January 1530, Captain Gerolamo da Canal sailed to Cephalonia where he enlisted 60 fresh rowers to address the shortage of manpower aboard the quinquereme. On 17 January 1530, from the islet of Hydra (Saronic Islands), Gerolamo wrote a long letter to the Signory, praising the technical features of his quinquereme:

> Most Serene Prince,
>
> I did not write earlier to you about the excellent quality of the quinquereme both because you had no doubt about it, and also because I recently joined the Venetian fleet [in Greece]. I assert that the quinquereme is different from the light galley; however, I experienced that the quinquereme has perfect sails, both at the stern and toward the bow, it is seaworthy and, as far as its speed, very few galleys could race with it. When I armed and outfitted the quinquereme, as Your Serenity knows, since there were 49 galleys that were operative on the sea, I thought it would have been better if I enlisted Greek rowers, and recently, I have hired 60 Greeks. Of course, Most Serene Prince, if the quinquereme had a crew of expert and professional rowers, very few galleys or none would be faster than the quinquereme. Moreover, I suggest to Your Serenity with reverence that vessels like the quinquereme should not be operating all the time, but only in case of challenging naval warfare. Moreover, Your Serenity, although I am not an expert on naval warfare, I acknowledge that the quinquereme is the best vessel ever built that is able to defeat any fleet of light galleys. Assuming that you arm ten quinqueremes and place them in front of your fleet of light galleys, I am sure that the quinqueremes would stop any enemy attack and would not permit them to damage the galleys. As I told you, Your Serenity, I am not an expert on naval warfare; however, few captains who are in service of the Venetian fleet fought in as many naval battles as I did. I would like to recommend to you that it would be extremely convenient to build 10 quinqueremes, and you must make sure that these vessels will be ready for use in the future. Surely, this type of vessels cannot be afforded all the time, given both its reputation and its expense. Nonetheless, I wanted to write to you

85 Ibid.

> these few words about the quinquereme, as good servants who are in charge of important matters of the Republic are required to do. Your Serenity, then, who is very wise, will decide as he pleases.[86]

A few months later, Gerolamo da Canal renewed to the Doge his suggestion of providing the Venetian fleet with ten more quinqueremes. In a letter addressed to the Council on 9 March 1530, Gerolamo da Canal reaffirmed the superiority of quinqueremes over light galleys. As confirmation for this, he asserted that he had defeated some galleys of French privateers.[87] Indeed, Cristoforo da Canal, the nephew of Gerolamo, in his *Della milizia marittima*, recalled that Gerolamo da Canal had engaged in a naval battle with the Barbary corsair Bessaguli in waters around *Cao Ducato* (also known in archival sources as Santa Maura, or modern Lefkada, Albania). Gerolamo had won a crushing victory:

> [Gerolamo da Canal], when he was the Captain of the quinquereme, by means of that galley alone, fought for five hours against three galleys of the corsair Bassaguli from Barbary, who had captured two Venetian galleys off Cape Ducato and was about to run away. But he [Gerolamo da Canal], not only defeated him [Bassaguli], but also killed everybody on board and, without reporting any damage for his part, saved the two Venetian galleys.[88]

Ten days later, Gerolamo da Canal incurred a misfortune, "while sailing in the direction of Crete, there was such a terrible weather for 14 consecutive days that it was impossible to even cover the ship with its awning, and, as a result, many of the crew almost lost their feet from the cold. *Sier* Piero da Canal, son of *sier* Jacoino, a relative of Gerolamo da Canal who was onboard [of the quinquereme], died."[89] On 9 May 1530, while still in Crete, Gerolamo da Canal suffered more losses, and wrote to the Signory that "many men aboard the

86 Sanuto, LII, col. 594-5; see APPENDIX, doc. 9.

87 Sanuto, LIII, col. 18.

88 Cristoforo da Canal, *Della militia maritima*, ed. Tenenti, *Cristoforo da Canal*, p. 58: *Essendo egli Governatore della galera di cinque remi, con quella sola galera per spatio di cinque hore combatté con tre galere di Bassaguli corsale di Barbaria, il quale aveva preso sopra cao Ducato due delle nostre galere et via se le menava. Egli non solamente lo vinse, ma tagliò a pezzi quanti erano sopra quelle e con niuno o poco danno dei suoi, le due perse recuperò.*

89 Sanuto, LIII, col. 118: *Adeo 14 zorni continui mai havia potuto butar la tenda per galia, sichè le povere zurme haveano quasi perso li piedi da fredo. Item, è morto sier Piero da Canal quondam sier Jacoino, era suo nobile.*

quinquereme had died, and others … could not be paid. He asked for more to be sent to pay the members of the crew, so that those miserable persons can sustain themselves, since they have no means of financing themselves, etc."[90] This pitiful image recalls what Baldissera Quintio Drachio wrote about Fausto's quinquereme in his *Visione* at the end of the sixteenth century, "it was not order, but confusion; it was a hospital and a lazaret, or better, it was a spectacle of death".[91]

Despite this misfortune the quinquereme continued to succeed against the enemy. On 9 July 1530, the quinquereme sunk two fustas belonging to Maltese corsairs, and Gerolamo da Canal wrote to the Senate indicating that he had captured a privateer's ship.[92] A week later, the quinquereme arrived at the harbor of *Capo Malio* (modern Malea promontory, Laconia), to await new instructions from Venice, since the Proveditor of the fleet, Alessandro da Ca' Pesaro, had just died.[93] In Venice, the Senators were discussing the issue of the vacant Admiralty position, mostly because "it is not proper to leave galleys that are at sea without a commander".[94] Therefore, the Sage of the Council proposed to elect *ad interim* either Gerolamo da Canal or Vincenzo Giustinian, who was the Captain of the *bastarde* or grand galley.[95] The Senators approved and appointed Gerolamo da Canal to the position, and the greatly disappointed Vincenzo Giustinian filed his complaints about the Council's decision.[96]

Thus, Gerolamo da Canal advanced in his career after having fought and defeated many enemy ships and proved himself an expert and qualified captain of the quinquereme. However, the Senate ordered that he had to serve aboard the galley of Alessandro da Ca' Pesaro. Thus, the senators decreed that the quinquereme, after eleven months of honorable service in the Venetian fleet, had to return to Venice.[97]

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90 Sanuto, LIII, col. 194: *È morti assà homeni di la galia, et altri … per non esser pagati, et si mandi danari per dar sovenzion, aziò queli meschini possano viver; lui non ha el modo de sovenirli, etc*.

91 Drachio, *Visione*, in ASVe, Archivio Proprio Contarini, busta 25, fol. 13r: *Non fu ordene, ma confusione, et fu un hospital, et uno lazareto, anzi uno spettacolo di morte*. The lazaret was a hospital for those affected with contagious diseases, particularly leprosy.

92 Sanuto, LIII, col. 337.

93 Sanuto, LIII, col. 349.

94 Sanuto, LIII, col. 352: *Non è da lassar le galie, sono fuora, senza governo*.

95 Sanuto, LIII, col. 353.

96 Sanuto, LIII, col. 382 and 396.

97 Sanuto, LIII, col. 353.

Conclusion

In the long letter that Gerolamo da Canal wrote to the Signory on 17 January 1530, he had greatly praised the quinquereme and approved Fausto's technical innovations and work. However, Fausto was well ahead of his time. He was able to combine his theoretical humanistic knowledge with practical shipbuilding skills. No one after him was able to build a galley according to ancient Greek and Roman proportions. His *marina architectura* lived and died with him. Although Fausto represented an isolated figure and an exception among the shipbuilders in the Venetian Arsenal who relied on empirical shipbuilding practices, he nevertheless profoundly influenced the history of naval architecture. Fausto purported to introduce in naval architecture a shipbuilding principle that he applied in the design of his quinquereme, and the sixteenth century proved to be a period of many technical innovations. Vettor Fausto, although an outsider to the fiercely guarded world of shipbuilding, paved the way for the foundations of a scientific revolution in the conservative realm of the Venetian Arsenal.

Appendix 1: ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, fol. 31r (23 September 1525)

È stato alla presentia nostra el fidel nostro Venetian Dominus Vetor Fausto che ne ha mostrato uno modello de una galia quinquereme, zoè che vuoga remi cinque per bancho, qual esta tractata et conserata da li prothi nostri del Arsenal, è ben conveniente uno navilio de tanta securità al Stato nostro da mar come saria la dicta quinquereme de haverne, et nel Arsenal nostro et insieme, et de retenir a' li servitii nostri dicto Dominus Vetor.

Landarà parte che per autorità de questo conseio sia ordinato ai Proveditor et Patroni nostri del Arsenal che debano deputar uno volto dove se habi ad levar la dicta quinquereme, et li sia dato el modo et aiuto de farla. Preterea sia scritto al orator nostro in Roma che debi supplicare la beatissima pontificia con un gratification nostra sia contenta proveder de ducati 500 de intrada de beneficii de la relligion de Rhodi, over de altra sorte beneficii primi vacanti al dicto Dominus Vetor. Et presa sarà la presente parte sia obligato dicto Dominus Vetor de metter in vera executione la voga dela dicta quinquereme et mostrarla al Provededor, Patroni, et prothi nostri del Arsenal. Et essendo approbata per i experti nostri sia commenzata dicta quinquereme et compita. Et sia preso che in questo mezo finochè vachino dicti beneficii sia dato al dicto Dominus Vetor per sustenation sua ducati 100 al anno quali habino ad cessar per rata come vacherano dicti beneficii, et tal provision debi commenzare dal iorno che sarà compita del tuto la dicta quinquereme et congnossuta cum vera experientia che la

vuoga reussì et sii laudata et approbata. Pretea sia data licentia al dicto Dominus Vetor chel possi portar arme lui et uno fameio che sia cum lui per segurtà de la persona sua, come el ne ha supplicato per molti respetti convenienti.

De parte _____17 _____16
De non _____ 7 _____ 8
Non synceri _____ 1 _____ 1

Nihil captum quia ¾ requiruntur
Secretum impositum

Appendix 2: ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, folios not numbered. On the reverse of the last folios there is written "Request by [Vettor] Fausto" (*Suplica del Fausto*)

Serenissimo Principe et Excellentissimi Signori.

Serenissimo Principe, vedendo io Vetor Fausto che le ocupation de la Sublimità Vostra sono di sorte che non lassa che 'l caso mio sia terminato, nè messa la parte che mi era stà promessa, credo non esser inconveniente cum questa mia scriptura redur in mente de la Sublimità Vostra et de questi Excellentissimi Signori il caso mio. Sapi, dunque, Vostra Sublimità, che già 7 anni io voluntieri ritornai in questa città et fui contento di lezer lettere greche cum la mità del salario che poteva haver da Lucchesi, Ragusei, come apar per istrumenti pubblici, non per altro se non per monstrar alla Sublimità Vostra quelli che tutto il tempo de la vita mia cum molti travagli, periculi, et longa fatica per il mondo haveva acquistato, perchè praticando cum marinari de diverse nation, zoè Cathelani, Provenzali, Normandi, Biscaini, Zenovesi, et altri, et havendo cercato tutte quasi le marine de Spagna, Francia, Italia et altre, parlando cum diversi capitanei, et tra li altri Piero Navaro, Pier Jam, el Biassa, el Gobo Dalmatin, el Doria, et cum li primi prothi de Napoli, Genoa, et che già sono da Pisa, tandem è ritrovato che la galìa grande et presta qual era la quinquereme che usavano romani ne le guerre, sì per la sua voluntà come perchè la poteva star sul mar ad ogni fortuna et tempo ruzo, seria signora de la marina et bateria ogni altro legno; il modello de la qual galia havendolo facto de mia man secondo le misure ritrovate ne li libri greci antiquissimi, io venni in Collegio presenti tutti quelli Excellentissimi Signori cum tutti li prothi di l'Arsenal vostro, et lo apresentai dicto modello, et li dissi che tal galia haveva queste condition: che la potea portar uno pezo di artellaria de 15 et più miara ultra li altri sui, la prova che butando 100 libre di ferro cum tanta polvere sempre quanto balla per la sua debita longeza saria sufiziente a ruinar senza periculo suo ogni possente navilio; et per esser assai grande la

potria star a ferro, et far le volte in mar dove stesseno altri grossi legni; seria etiam de incredibel avantazo a la battaglia da mar. Item, per la sua bona fortuna, et conveniente numero di remi, la provezaria et andaria almanco a par a par cum le gagliarde sotil. Tutte queste condition io promissi che haveria la dicta galia. Li prothi, veramente, di la Sublimità Vostra havendo voluto veder le misure sue et quelle ben considerar, disseno che li faria gli effecti sopraditti et seria presta, se io li metesse la voga tal che tutti li remi operassino, confessano non lo saper far loro. Alora io me ofersi di far talmente che quelli vederiano che 'l quinto remo vogeria meglio di quel che fa al presente il terzo, cum questo che la Sublimità Vostra pur facesse haver dal Pontefice, per esser cosa di comun utile a la Christianità, beneficii per ducati 500 de intrada de la Religion de Rodi over altri; et fra questo mezo mi desse provision di ducati 150 a l'anno. Dove per la Sublimità Vostra et per quelli Excellentissimi Signori fu monstrata grandissima promptezza di voler meter tal parte; tamen nulla fin hora vedo esser stà facto. Al presente, veramente, intendendo che la Sublimità Vostra desiderosa di haver legni di tal sorte che possino bater le barze de corsari di ponente, vol far nave cum tanta sua spesa, item li offero la sopraditta galia quinquereme che farà tutti li effecti sopradicti; il che niuna di le galie de la Sublimità Vostra li po' far nè sotil nè bastardetta per esser piccola, nè grossa nè bastarda per non poter montar a vento col provizar. Et dico volerli monstrar in actual voga come 5 homeni insieme vogeranno meglio tutti 5 che non fanno al presente li tre di le galie sotil; et se la dicta non sarà laudata da li pratici, et che cum l'ochio la Sublimità Vostra non vedi l'effecto che li prometto, non voglio haver niente. Et per parlarli ancor più chiaramente, quando el si guardi a spesa prima che si fazi el corpo de la ditta galìa, quella me dii una bastarda del suo Arsenal, et lassi che io la conzi a mio modo, et li meti la voga secundo la sua portada per esser bassa in pontal. Vostra Sublimità vederà quanto avantazo sarà da quella a le altre ancora che la non sia proportionata; per il che si potrà comprender quel che seria la quinquereme cum tutte le sue proportion, remetendo poi facta galìa a descrition di Vostra Sublimità disminuir il premio parendoli che l'artificio nol meritasse; il qual spero li parerà meravigliosamente grande et bello. Queste, Serenissino Principe et Excellentissimi Signori, son le cose che un vostro servitor ha zercato per il mondo, et cum l'adiuto di le scripture antique de greci et da romani tandem ha trovato, et le apresenta a la Sublimità Vostra, le qual saranno de grandissima reputation, benefizio, et segurtà de questa amplissima città. Quella adunque non fazi che 'l pari, che, questi Excellentissimi Signori li quali portano il vanto et laude appresso tutto il mondo di li più sapientissimi et peritissimi de la guerra da mar, non si habino dignato di voler veder et haver servitor di tanta importantia che un suo povero servitor li ha apresentato, perchè certo poche tal galìe sarian suficiente a ruinar ogni potente armata de inimici; suplicando reverentemente, che quando li piacque de exaudirmi la si degni far che io cum uno famiglio possiamo portar arme per li respecti che potesseno esser notissimi alla Sublimità Vostra.

Appendix 3: ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti secrete, reg. 1, fol. 62r (23 May 1526)

Che la supplication de Dominus Victor Fausto hora lecta continente la oblation de far la gallia quinquereme sia remessa al collegio nostro qual possi venir cum le opinion sue al conseio nostro de pregadi per deliberare quanto li parera, exceptuando perhò el darli licentia de le arme per esser cosa spectante a' questo conseio.

De parte _____10 _____ 9

Volunt che la oblation de Dominus Vetor Fausto sia acceptata et che li sia data la commodità el domanda per far la gallia quinquereme, et visto reussir per experientia quanto el se offerisse, li sia usata quella recognition parerà a' questo conseio.

De parte _____ 10 _____ 10
De non _____ 8
Non synceri _____ 1 _____ 10

Appendix 4: Sanuto, XLII, col. 765-66

Questo Conseio ha inteso per la suplication hora lecta, quanto il fidelissimo nostro domino Vetor Fausto promette di far circa la galia quinquereme, il modello di la qual essendo stà visto per li proti nostri et aprobato, resta in dubio solum la voga, et essendo omnino necessario de vederla, che reuscendo saria de grandissima reputation et securtà del Stato nostro, però: l'anderà parte che'l prefato domino Vetor debbi venir in Collegio presente il Serenissimo Principe et quelli pratici che parerà al ditto Collegio, et mostrar la voga de la ditta quinquereme; et essendo qualla aprobata come reussibile, siano obligati li Patroni a l'Arsenal nostri deputadi a far la ditta quinquereme, et darli ogni possibile et celere expeditione, sì de maistranza, legname come de ogni altra cosa che li accaderà per il compir di la ditta galia, senza interposition de tempo. Quando veramente al Collegio nostro la voga monstrata non paresse reussibile, in questo caso li sia data una galia bastarda di l'Arsenal nostro sopra la qual ditto domino Vetor habbi a monstrar la voga, conzada la ditta galia a suo modo, et siano obligati li ditti Patroni darli similetr ogni possibile expedition de quando el ditto li richiederà; et reussendo la ditta voga, li sia consegnato il volto per far immediate la ditta galia ut supra.

Appendix 5: Sanuto, XLIX, col. 357

A dì 11, la mattina. El Serenissimo vestito di veludo cremesin et di sopra un manto aperto su le spalle, con il Collegio tutto, et procuratori zerca 10, et altri 10 senatori vicini a San Marco mandati a invidar, et tra li altri sier Andrea Mudazo et sier Piero Lando

provedadori a l'Arsenal, anoe con li piati a l'Arsenal et intrò per l'Arsenal nuovo: vide le barze si fa, una de le qual è quasi compita; vete la galia quinqueremi qual ha fatto far Vettor Fausto, el qual era lì et diceva le opration sue et esser reussita.

Appendix 6: Sanuto, L, col. 345-46

A dì 21, la marina. In questa matina, la galia quinquereme trata di l'Arsenal con li homeni de trageti, capitanio sier alvise Sagredo patron a l'Arsenal per condurla a Chioza, andò voltizando [...] la galia quinquereme ussita de l'Arsenal, carga de artellarie aziò l'habi el suo peso, con una colubrina de...a prova, capitanio sier alvise Sagredo patron a l'Arsenal, armiraio l'autor di essa Vetor Fausto, comito...et con la zurma,...si levò de dove l'era sorta, con la coperta di la galia de sier Agustin da Mula fo proveditor in armada, e con li nobeli, et vene vogando fino a Santo Antonio, dove io era et la vidi vogar tutti a un tempo et ben, per quanto si potè veder, et salutado tre volte Santo Antonio, justa el consueto, la voltò et ritornò a segonda de aqua et de vento molto velocemente, et andò a San Zorzi Mazor, et salutò etiam lì et per mezo San Marco.

Appendix 7: Sanuto, L, col. 363

Dapoi disnar, per esser zorno deputato a veder vogar la galia quinqueremes, la qual questa matina insieme con la galia soracomito sier Marco Corner, quondam sier Piero da Santa Margherita andò verso Malamoco, per venir poi a hore 19, con l'acqua a seconda, insieme vogando, per veder chi voga più presto. Et però poi vespero il Serenissimo, invitato gli oratori tutti, excepto Urbin et Mantoa, con li piati et zentilhomini molti, tra li qual sier Vetor Morexini, andoe al castel, chiamato Castel nuovo, dove fu preparato da sentar con tapezarie er coperto per il sol, et barche infinite poi fuora di do castelli et per canal; fo stimato da barche numero...et fino barche di Padoa con persone dentro, di Chioza una infinità di barche, et tal gondola è sta pagata per hozi lire 8 in 10, solum per veder tal cossa. Donne assai in barche, et procuratori, et fino con l'arziepiscopo di Nicosia Podacataro in barcheta con D. Lippomano primocerio di Padoa. Hor ditte galie e l'hora deputata, trato un signal, veneno vogando a regata una di l'altra, et prima vogava la Cornara, ma zonti quasi a li Castelli, la quinqueremes era di sora, et pense tanto la Cornera a terra che la passò davanti il Serenissimo, et cussì vene avanti vogando fino a San Marco, con tante barche per canal et velle di barche grosse state in pielago che pareva una armata. Fo bellissimo veder. Questa galia quinquereme ha la sua vuoga ma è poco avanti di le altre galie sotil; sichè Vetor Fausto, autor di darli il sesto, sarà immortal. Et dapoi, venuta la Signoria a San Marco, ditta galia cinqueremi vene vogando per canal grando fino a la chà Foscari, dove la zirò, ma con grandissima fatica per esser longa passa 28, è più che passa tre più di le sotil. Et era grandissimo numero di barche per canal grando, tra le qual io vi fui, et durò la festa fino sera.

Appendix 8: Bembo, letter n. 975

M'avete rallegrato con le vostre lettere scrittemi dell'onorato successo e vittoria del nostro Fausto, e della sua a questo secolo nuova galea cinquereme avuta in contesa pubblica con quella degli tre in presenza del Serenissimo Principe e del Senato, e in fine della città tutta, le quali io ieri a notte ricevei [...] quando io, letta quella parte, dove dite le galee esser venute quasi per infino alla presenza del Principe di pari corso, ed alle volte a trireme aver passato la cinquereme d'alcun poco spazio, lessi poi quell'altra che segue, dove narrate che il Fausto, messosi per lo mezzo della galea inanimava i suoi galeotti a mostrar la loro virtù, e che egli allora in un punto passò la trireme non altramente che se ella fosse stata uno scoglio con tanta velocità che parve a ciascuno cosa meravigliosa, io non potei tenere la voce dalla dolcezza che mi recò quella lettura. La qual dolcezza poi più abbondevolmente ancora mi si raddoppiò nell'animo, quando io poco dappoi lessi che il Principe, il quale dubitava che il Fausto perdesse vedendo quel fine non ritenne due lacrime dalla molta gioia che egli ne sentì.

Appendix 9: Sanuto, LII, col. 594-595

Serenissimo Principe, se fin hora non li ho significato particularmente di quanta bontà sia questa quinquereme, la causa è stata ei non esser inquietato, nè manco havermi trovato fra galie. Non li dico che la quinquereme sempre si pol metter nel numero de galie sottil, et sappia certo Vostra Serenità che la vela è perfettissima, sì in puppa come de l'asta, bonissima marinera, et del remo poche galie li anderano avanti. Ancora che io l'habbia armata, come è noto a Vostra Serenità, da poi che era fora 49 galie da Venetia che ho convenuto tuor homeni grezi et ultimamente ho tolto a Cephalonia homini 60 grezissimi, certo, Serenissimo Principe, se questa galia havesse una zurma pratica, over che questa fusse assuefata, certo o poche o niuna galia de l'armata li andaria davanti. Et, parlando cum ogni reverentia, i navili de questa sorte non sono da tenir fuora salvo che in tempo de gran fatione; et sapia certo Vostra Serenità, per quel poco judicio che io ho di le cose naval, io non cognosco legni che più facile sia a fermar una armata de galie sotil che la quinquereme; che havendone, ne le teste de una armata de galie sotil, 10 quinquereme, io non credo che navili da remo li potesse offender. Et ben confesso a Vostra Serenità io saper poco; ma quella sia certa che pochi nostri pur si hanno trovato in tanti lochi dove le armate di Vostra Serenità hanno fatto fation, quanto io vostro servitor. Ben li aricordo cum ogni reverentia, che 'l non saria se non a proposito che Vostra Sublimità ne facesse far 10; et la sia certa che a qualche bisogno de importantia le torneriano a gran comodo de le cose de Vostra Sublimità. Ben è vero che non sono navili da tenir de continuo, sì per la reputation che etiam per la spesa. Io ho voluto cum ogni reverentia dir queste poche parole a quella, come fanno li boni servitori che

hanno cargo de le cose de Vostra Sublimità, la qual è sapientissima et farà quanto li parerà a proposito.

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CHAPTER 3

Sea Power and the Ottomans in the Early Modern Mediterranean World

Elina Gugliuzzo

Introduction

The Mediterranean was not a space dominated exclusively by political actors. It is in fact of great importance to highlight the role of the networks of ransom, trust, and credit of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian intermediaries, networks that the sovereigns had to negotiate carefully as they in turn tried to impose their vision of political interaction and exchange in the Mediterranean. In particular, many scholars now share the idea that cultural mediation has historically occurred in what the literary critic Mary Louise Pratt famously defined as 'contact zones', in a few words, "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination".[1] Studies of Mediterranean cultural interaction have often succumbed to a version of Orientalism themselves. Many of them fail to distinguish between and properly historicize the categories of 'Islam' 'Arabs' 'Turks' and 'the Ottoman Empire,' and treat these supposedly interchangeable categories merely as disembodied figments of European imagination. More than other forms of knowledge and information, however, captives played a central role in the production and transmission of strategic information and knowledge. Captives sent home information about enemy corsairs, movements of hostile fleets and plans of their captors to attack their countries; but they also produced knowledge: maps, topographic accounts and detailed programs explicitly geared towards conquest and defense. In occupying this role, captives were instrumental to the shaping and maintenance of the Habsburg imperial boundaries in the Mediterranean. At the same time, spies played a crucial role in early modern imperial rivalries: any particular group of formal (such as dragomans whose service is thought to have been introduced in the early sixteenth century, employing at the beginning especially converts: Yunus Bey, who died in 1551, was one of these dragomans of

1 M.L. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London 1992. See also M.E., Mudimbe-Boyi, *Beyond dichotomies: Histories, identities, cultures, and the challenge of globalization*, Albany 2002.

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Greek origin) or informal intermediaries was indispensable for diplomatic communication.[2] While past scholars have emphasized the Islam/Christendom division in the Mediterranean, these go-betweens, who mastered the codes of both cultures, easily crossed invisible boundaries between civilizations and connected the Ottomans and the Habsburgs.[3] Apart from providing both empires with regular information on political and military developments, these entrepreneur information brokers played an active diplomatic role between two capitals and even participated in Ottoman factional politics.[4] It may be also interesting in order to better understand the captivity of Christians in North Africa, on the one hand, and sixteenth century Mediterranean history, on the other, if we try to approach these histories from a perspective of 'connected' history.[5] The practice of ransom put Ottoman and Habsburg elites into contact because valuable prisoners-of-war generally ended up at the hands of the other side's elites who sought to preserve for themselves these prestigious slaves with the hope that they could be ransomed for large amounts. The fact that prominent people who constituted the human capital of both empires were ransomed rather than eliminated demonstrates the cooperation between imperial elites as much as a curious example where the financial motives of individuals outweighed the *raison d'état*. According to a recent study, it should be take into consideration the concessions and compromises which the Ottomans and Habsburgs of Spain made in order to legitimate or justify their rule in foreign territories.[6] Moreover, any major military campaign or force in the early modern Mediterranean was profoundly international in nature and origin, as only by drawing resources from the numerous microecologies of the 'corrupting sea' could sixteenth-century armies and navies be sustained.[7]

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7 P. Williams, *Empire and Holy War in the Mediterranean: the Galley and the Maritime Conflict between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire*, London, New York 2014; B. Cianci, *Le Navi della mezzaluna. La marina dell'impero ottomano (1299-1923),* Bologna 2015.

The Rise of the Ottoman Naval Power

By the mid-fifteenth century, Ottoman-controlled territories had completely enveloped Constantinople. Ottoman expansion at the expense of the Byzantine empire was in fact further aided by the weakness of the heir of Roman glory. Financially exhausted, internally corrupted, and politically separated from the main European powers, the Byzantine empire was simply incapable of offering a coherent and effective defense against the growing Ottoman forces.The city, the Second Rome, capital of a by-then inexistent empire, fell in 1453 after a siege. It is only then the Ottomans began a considerable and rapid shipbuilding program, rising to challenge in the following century Venice in the Mediterranean sea and the Portuguese in the Indian ocean. By conquering Constantinople, however, the Ottomans gained more than some tacit recognition of their power. With the city under their control, the Ottomans inherited not only a strategically located position dominating the straits but also a centre of naval power. A testament of this change was the fact that, only a year after the fall of Constantinople, Venice signed a commercial agreement with the Ottomans, both parties more eager to maintain the flow of trade than to fight for religious predominance.[8] Venice had always been a part of the larger trade networks of the Eastern Mediterranean, both in Byzantine as well as in Ottoman times, and the political, cultural and artistic influences of the Eastern Mediterranean on Venice, the celebrated 'centre of mediation between the West and the East', had long been appreciated. For the Ottomans, the port served as a 'key commercial entrepot' linking the Black Sea with the Mediterranean. Moreover, the shipyards of Constantinople, together with their skilled labour, remained mostly untouched by the siege and the conquest. The Ottoman Empire now both had the ability and the need to turn its attention to the sea, and the Sultan, Mehmed II, began a concerted effort to expand and strengthen the Ottoman fleet.[9] 'It was their [Ottoman] recognition of the importance of the sea and the decision to establish a navy which set the Ottomans apart from the other Muslim empires: the Ottoman Empire became a maritime empire'.[10] The larger geopolitical context of Ottoman rise to power influenced when and why the Ottomans decided to build a naval force. The Eastern Mediterranean, which became the seat of Ottoman power, had been

8 G. Varriale, *Arrivano li Turchi : guerra navale e spionaggio nel Mediterraneo (1532-1582)*, Novi Ligure 2014.

9 K. DeVries, *'Gunpowder Weapons at the Siege of Constantinople, 1453,'* in Y. Lev (ed.), *War and Society in the Eastern Mediterranean, 7th–15th Centuries*, Leiden 1997, pp. 343-62.

10 G. Ágoston, *Ottoman Warfare in Europe 1453-1826*, in J. Black (ed.), *European* Warfare, *1453-1815*, London 1999, p. 128.

for centuries the key link between the Asian and European markets, and the Ottomans simply replaced the previous holders of this position. Moreover, the period of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century is characterized by dramatic geopolitical changes, fueled by technological advances and geographic discoveries, and the Ottoman naval rise is in many ways a response to this "Age of Discoveries". In this 'inclusive' context it was possible that an Ottoman scholar and sea captain such as Piri Reis might have access to new European maps that remained quite unknown to scholars belonging to a less cosmopolitan background. But it is only with the complete defeat of Byzantium, the stabilization of the frontier on the Danube, and the removal of the threats from the east and south that the Ottomans could consider a greater role on the sea. In brief, before the 1450s the Ottomans did not need a navy to expand and could not afford one given their main strategic concerns. But from 1450 onwards, the Ottoman empire needed a navy to maintain control over its Eastern Mediterranean sphere of influence and, perhaps most importantly, to respond to slow but dramatic changes in the larger strategic situation of Eurasia.[11] "The functions of navies can be conceived as a trinity, the idea of three-in-one. The unity (the one-ness) of the trinity is provided by the idea of the use of the sea[…]the character of the trinity is defined by the three characteristic modes of action by which navies carry out their purposes: namely the military, the diplomatic, and the policing functions".[12] There were two main maritime vectors of Ottoman expansion: the Mediterranean and the Red Sea/Indian Ocean. The former was dictated by a strategy of defense and consolidation, while the latter was characterized by an offensive posture aimed at recapturing a connection with Asia. There were profound differences between these two theaters, and the Ottomans failed to adapt their Mediterranean tactics and technology to the demands of the Indian Ocean. Building a navy is a difficult process, and the Ottomans were not exempt from the technical challenges of shipbuilding, of developing navigation skills, and of training a competent body of seamen. While the Ottomans had easy access to shipbuilding material, they lacked technical know-how and were often forced to rely on Western (often Italian) shipbuilders. Yet, their main technological weakness was that the core of the Ottoman navy was a fleet of galleys, excellent at navigating the narrow straits, long coastlines, and often windless waters of the

11 K. Roy, *Military Transition in Early Modern Asia, 1400-1750. Cavalry, Guns, Government and Ships*, London, New York 2014, pp. 1-10.

12 K. Booth, *Navies and Foreign Policy*, Croom Helm, London 1977, p. 15, as quoted in J.B. Hattendorf, R.W. Unger (eds.), *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, Woodbridge 2003, p. 15.

Mediterranean sea, but unsuited for the rough open oceans. According to Tuncay Zorlu the Ottomans, in their concept of civilisation at least in the classical period, had a general tendency to adopt easily all kinds of technical knowledge or the products of technology, which were deemed beneficial to humanity and environment irrespective of their origin.[13] The attitudes of the Ottomans towards western science and technology are also interpreted as a "selective attitude" adopted by a powerful empire in response to the developments outside its own sphere and area of influence. The Ottomans started to transfer European technology, especially in the fields of firearms, cartography, and mining in the fifteenth century. Furthermore, the Ottomans had the opportunity to become acquainted with the Renaissance astronomy and medicine through the Jewish scholars who took refuge in the Ottoman Empire.[14] Actually, under Mehmed II and Bayezid II, the Ottomans acquired the common naval technology of the Mediterranean, adopting the oared galley as their principal vessel. From the 1560s, following their Mediterranean rivals, the Ottomans too adopted the "al scaloccio" system, by which all oarsmen on the same bench pulled a single oar. This arrangement helped to increase the number of oarsmen. Ottoman galleys usually carried a centre-line cannon and two smaller flanking culverins. Impressed by the Venetian galeasses, the Ottomans decided to imitate these large and heavily armed galleys that could fire broadsides. During the rebuilding of the fleet destroyed at the battle of Lepanto, the Ottoman arsenals in Sinop and Istanbul constructed five galeasses. The size of the Ottoman navy was already impressive under Mehmed II, who employed 380 galleys in his naval expeditions against the Genoese administered Crimean port city of Caffa in 1475. A few decades later, during the 1499-1503 Ottoman-Venetian war, Bayezid II considerably strengthened the navy, ordering the construction of no less than 250 galleys.

Originally, galleys were derived from the Medieval Greek, *galea,* which was a type of small Byzantine galley. Scholars, such as Lionel Casson, group galleys as oar-powered ships, and classify them together with other oar-driven ships like the Viking longships. But they are generally recognized as ships belonging to a specific Mediterranean tradition. Since 1450, the Mediterranean powers (the Ottomans, the Venetians, and the Habsburg Empire) featured galley ships in their naval fleets. The use of cannons initially allowed for galley warships to

13 T. Zorlu, "*Some Remarks on the Ottoman Perception of Science and Technology Transfer*", in G. Koçan (ed.), *Transnational Concepts, Transfers and the Challenge of Peripheries*, İstanbul 2008, pp. 286-96.

14 J.I. Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews and the World of Maritime Empires (1540-1740)*, Leiden 2002.

become effective "mobile artillery platforms". Moreover, the amphibious abilities of galleys were enhanced as soldiers were able to efficiently assault fortresses with the galleys' artillery support as well defend the beached galley ship in combat. Even assuming technical parity, by the mid-sixteenth century the Ottoman navy had two clear advantages over its Venetian and other Christian counterpart<s>. First, the Ottomans controlled most of the East Mediterranean coastline. This allowed the Ottomans to hinder, and if necessary block, European shipping, to control access to key shipbuilding resources (especially timber which was in short supply in Italy), and to encircle the Eastern Mediterranean making an Ottoman lake of it. The second advantage stemmed from the Sultan's reliance on North African Muslim corsairs, who supplied him with manpower as well as new technologies. Manpower was essential for a Mediterranean fleet. In the sixteenth century cost-containment in the naval sphere was achieved through the cooptation by the imperial fleet based in Istanbul of "corsair freelancers" whose fleets operated out of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli.[15]

The large armadas mobilized on both sides of the Mediterranean in the sixteenth century were the result of a multi-party collaborative effort representing the combined capacity of privately-operated and state-subsidized fleets. Ehud Toledano has stressed the importance to understand Ottoman slavery "as a *social relationship*, that is the dynamic take-and-give between owner and slave in a variety of changing situations".[16] The importance of man-power of the slaves in rowing on the ships is fundamental: the success of seapower depended on this "human engine".

J.H Pryor in a study focusing on the Ottomans' presence in the Mediterranean and contingent factors influencing the level of their naval activity, has shown conclusively how physical, geographical and environmental constraints imposed by tides, prevailing winds and other natural forces defined the role they were able to play. Although Ottoman intentions in the Mediterranean had been signalled by the conquest of Rhodes in 1522, it was only through a patient and gradual building up of supply bases, especially in the Aegean – a process continued in phases over the course of an entire century between the late 1460s and the fall of Chios in 1566 – that Ottomans were able to to position

15 L. Sicking, *Islands, pirates, privateers and the Ottoman Empire in the early modern Mediterranean*, in D. Couto, F. Günergun, M.P. Pedani (eds.), *Seapower, Trade and Technology. Studies in Turkish Maritime History*, Istanbul 2014, pp. 239-252.

16 E. Toledano, "*The Concept of Slavery in Ottoman and Other Muslim Societies: Dichotomy or Continuum?*," in M. Toru and J.E. Philips (eds), *Slave Elites in the Middle East and Africa: A Comparative Study*, London and New York 2000, pp. 159-76.

themselves to give adequate support to fleet operations in the mid-Mediterranean. According to Pryor's study, position was of equal importance to "a slow, relentless and exhausting drive to gain possession of the bases and islands from which war galleys could control the sea lanes".[17]

Western Seafare

The early modern period saw both greater interaction between different parts of the world and the rise of European influence and power. The two aspects were linked. It was through the projection of European power that the "Old World" and the "New World" were connected, and indeed that the '"New World'" was created as an idea, since the moment in which, first Spain and Portugal, and later, England, France and the Dutch conquered and settled important portions of North and South America. It was through the projection of Portuguese naval power from the 1490s that the Old World was reshaped and that European trade and military strength began to make their impact in the Indian Ocean. As Jeremy Black has pointed out the background of the European warfare in this period included not only the response to Ottoman strength, but also the continuing process of change in late medieval Europe.[18] This owed something to new technology, but was also a consequence of political developments, specifically the growing strength of a number of states in the fifteenth century. It is necessary to think not in terms of the West versus the 'Rest', but of specific western initiatives and their interaction with the complex rivalries and relationships of local states, a point also true for the expansion of non-western powers. In addition, non-western powers benefited from rivalries between the western powers, although the overseas projection of western powers, directed mainly towards the New World, was such that helped the resistance to western expansion.

Empire-building was supported by an uninterrupted movement of men and women between continents and through oceanic circuits. They played determing roles in other, mostly cross-cultural, dynamics. Seafarers were central agents of all these technical, economic, anthropological, cultural and religious

17 The Ottoman navy transported the entire army and its siege train and isolated the island. The main fortress was a fortification system of modern design, and the defenders stocked abundant supplies well before the start of the operation. The siege continued on for five months and drew out of the campaign season: J.H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean, 649-1571*, Cambridge 1988, p. 177.

18 J. Black, *European Warfare*, London 2002, p. 69.

transfers and key elements of worlds built on the basis of maritime skills and maritime dominion. They were not only "maritime agents", but simultaneously economic, social and cultural mediators; whether they were seafarers, economic brokers, cultural mediators or informal and self-organized entrepreneurs, they all played central roles as empire-builders among the different shores of the Mediterranean and beyond.[19] Thus, in spite of the different political and religious legitimization involved, Ottoman attitudes towards plunder were not so fundamentally different from those documented in the wars among Christian princes. In the Ottoman instance, to be sure, booty gained in battle with the 'infidel' (*gaza malı*) was a source of social prestige. All this means that while Ottoman soldiers were concerned about booty-making, in this they were not very different from their central European opposite 'rivals'. In the first half of the seventeenth century, Habsburg armies were still not fully state-controlled, but had been organized largely by military entrepreneurs. These commanders-*cum*businessmen supplied soldiers to a variety of rulers with the hope of profiting from their investments, in terms of money and also of political power. In the case of navies, it is possible to present a model of change driven by military technology and operational considerations. Guilmartin's central concern is to analyze the impact of gunpowder weapons on this system of war. Maintaining the galleys to move resources and men over the seas was actually more important to the Spanish monarchy than conducting an unwinnable and risky holy war. One of the most important resources were cannons, which galleys were quick to employ to the extent they could, by mounting sometimes quite large artillery in their bows. Such guns were supposed to be fired at point blank range, as an aid to boarding. Fleet tactics were calculated to amplify the resulting shock. A well-ordered galley fleet advanced, like a land army, in line abreast, so as to concentrate the fire of its guns (a consideration that also explains the practice of stern-first defensive grounding, with all guns pointing out to sea). Individual ships could then employ their oars to maneuver at the last second, in order to bring their ordinance to bear most effectively against their targets. Repeated long range bombardment was deemed pointless, since a rowed galley could cross the effective range of existing guns in less time than it took to reload them. In this model, the prime means of, and reason for, change would be the rise in the sixteenth century of the large specialised warship, built and maintained just for war, rather than also acting as a peacetime trader.These ships, able to take part in sustained artillery duels at close

19 J. Fynn-Paul (ed.), *War, Entrepreneurs, and the State in Europe and the Mediterranean, 1300-1800*, Boston Leiden 2014.

range, were expensive to build, administer, and maintain. As a consequence, the number of potential maritime powers was obviously restricted.

Conclusion

The most striking fact of Ottoman history is the rapidity of the Ottoman naval rise. The Ottoman state was for more than a century focused only on territorial conquests, and then, in the second half of the fifteenth century, it developed a growing and increasingly more effective fleet. Very quickly, the Ottomans succeeded in challenging, and defeating, the main Mediterranean power, Venice, and continued to be a serious threat to the other European powers. But the maintenance of fleets in both empires required the delegation of authority to private contractors and thereby reduced centralized state power. The circulation of captives as well as exchanges between the captives of various forms of information in a variety of textual genres across the sea, and the interactions of captives with institutions such as the family, the Inquisition, and Maghribean and Spanish political bureaucracies, brought the two Mediterranean coasts into "creative contact". Thanks to a substantial scholarship, today it is hard to deny that the Ottomans enjoyed extensive commercial and diplomatic ties with European states in the early modern period, while recent studies argue for Ottoman contributions to innovations and developments which were long assumed to be one hundred percent European products. Recent scholarship has discredited the prevailing view that the Ottomans resisted innovations: this older view provides much of the 'evidence' for Ottoman 'decline'.[20]

Why did the Ottomans become the most serious muslim antagonist of the western powers? Why and how did they become a naval power, capable of instilling terror among European states and of projecting power across the Mediterranean and as far as India? In the prologue to the elaborate history which Kemal Pashazade wrote at the command of Bayezid II, the author compares the Ottoman history with earlier Muslim dynasties and sums up under three heads the reasons of their superiority. The Ottomans unlike other Muslim dynasties, came to power not through the violent overthrow of older Muslim states within the Islamic community, but through the conquest of territories

20 G. Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultans: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire*, New York 2005; B. Arbel, "*Maps of the World for Ottoman Princes? Further Evidence and Questions concerning the 'Mappamondo' of Hajji Ahmed*" in *Imago Mundi* 54 (2002): pp. 19-29.

pertaining to the infidel world, the Dar al-Harb.[21] In contrast there is also the view that the Muslims did not really care much about Europe; or that, if they did care, it was only from the point of view of trade. Secondly, according to Kemal Pashazade in the Ottoman state the authority of the sovereign and the validity of the laws were complete and absolute. Thirdly, the Ottoman state was richer, more populous and more extensive than all others. No other state possesses the military power of the Ottomans; the Ottomans have powerful artillery and a great maritime power.[22] But as Karen Barkey has pointed out "The construction of this formidable political apparatus of authority was not just the result of fire, plunder, rape, death and destruction. It was also the result of brokerage among different religious, social, and economic groups that formed new social relations, combining diverse ideas and practices and forging new identities".[23]

With regard to the possible relationship between firearms and army growth, we have seen that Ottoman military expansion was only partly due to external military challenges and that domestic socioeconomic factors also played an important role in the transformation of the sultans' armed forces. In a parallel fashion, battle against "the Turk" was also a potent means of asserting the legitimacy of the Habsburg rulers, and the Venetian tendency to place commercial considerations over "holy war, Catholic style" was quite often the subject of acerbic criticism.[24] Among the major European kings, only François I of France was bravely defying the widespread adverse publicity of entering into an alliance with 'the infidel'. Recent work has shown that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century French policy makers took the 'propagandistic' opposition in a number of European countries to the Franco-Ottoman alliance quite seriously. In order not to 'lose face' among Christian rulers, the kings of France, for instance, were quite willing to allow their noble subjects to enlist in the Order of Malta, and thus have French noblemen engaged in the 'battle against the infidel' that the crown itself avoided because of its rivalry with the Habsburgs.[25] However in the end, the anti-Ottoman alliances promoted by the popes were mostly of short duration, with especially the Venetians tending to rapidly end wars in which they had originally joined with much fanfare, in order to protect

21 A. Abel, "*Dar al-Harb*", in C.E. Bosworth et al. (eds.) "*The Encyclopaedia of Islam",* 2nd Edition, Leiden 1960-2002.

22 K. Pashazade, *History of the House of Osman* (*Tevarih-i Ali Osman*), Ankara 1970.

23 K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference. The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge 2008, p. 28.

24 J. Armingaud, *Venise et le le Bas-Empire. Histoire des relations de Venise avec l'Empire d'Orient*, Paris 1868.

25 P. Contamine (ed.), *War and Competition between States*, Oxford 2000.

their Mediterranean trade. In conclusion, the inter-imperial rivalry between the Ottoman sultans and the Habsburg rulers, or between Ottomans and Venetians, did not exclude an albeit limited appreciation for the military virtues and artistic or craft skills of "the other side". Perhaps by including the work of outsiders into their court and treasury, the Ottoman sultans indicated that they had truly conquered a "world empire".

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CHAPTER 4

Conflict and Collaboration: The Spanish and Ottoman Navies in the Mediterranean, 1453-1923

Wayne H. Bowen

After centuries as great powers, by the early eighteenth century, the Spanish and Ottoman Empires saw their territories encroached on by Britain, France and other states. This was not a passive process for either state; both attempted to reverse imperial decline through reforms, military action and diplomacy. Their ultimate failures do not mean that success was impossible, and at some points both Madrid and Istanbul did revive their fortunes in impressive ways. In the late eighteenth century, and again in the mid-nineteenth century after Napoleon, Spain and the Ottomans made vigorous efforts to assert themselves in the Mediterranean.[1] At the same time, Spain and the Ottoman Empire ended their centuries-long hostility, and began to cooperate through treaties, trade, and diplomatic coordination. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, Spanish defeats in the Spanish American War and Ottoman losses in North Africa ended this resurgence. Spain's Moroccan conquests in 1923-24 aside, the eras of Spanish and Ottoman expansion were over.

The relationship between the Spanish and the Turks began badly, with a century of combat in and around the Mediterranean, North Africa, and throughout Europe. Indeed, it would not be inaccurate to regard the struggle between these two empires as a continuation of the centuries-long religious wars between Islam and Christianity, which had begun with the onslaught of Muslim warriors against the Byzantine Empire in the seventh century, reaching their most cataclysmic with the fall of Constantinople to the Muslim Turks in 1453 and the completion of the *Reconquista* by Spanish Christians in 1492. In 1571, the two largest fleets in the world, led by Spain and the Ottomans, converged at Lepanto, off the coast of Greece. This was a clash not only of two navies, but of two religions, two empires, and two civilizations.[2] Lepanto was a continuation of the wars of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who had cam-

1 *Tratado de Paz y Amistad entre S.M. Católica y S.M El Rey de Marruecos*, 26 April 1860. "Colección de los Tratados, Convenios y Documentos Internacionales" (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1894), pp.151-155.

2 Toledo, P., "Lepanto: el ultimo encuentro naval por la soberania mundial en el mediterraneo," Muzaffer Arikan and Paulino Toledo (trans.), "*XIV.-XVI. Yüzyillarda Tü rk-Ispanyol Ilişkileri ve*

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paigned in North Africa against the Ottomans. Charles V, who was also King Charles II of Spain, felt the imperative to Crusade against the Turks with greater dedication and enthusiasm than any other monarch. This was not only a drive intrinsic to Charles V; many of his subjects and allies, including the pope, begged him to rid Europe of the Turkish menace, launch a Crusade to retake the Holy Land, and otherwise wage Holy War against Istanbul.[3]

Charles V, and his successor as King of Spain, Phillip II, waged war against the Ottomans despite having other enemies – Christian ones – at their backs, who often made common cause with the Muslim to the East. The French monarchs, especially, proved willing to abandon the unity for Christendom in search of strategic alliances with Istanbul, but other states, including England, Venice, and even Dutch Protestant rebels, seeking to free themselves from Catholic Spain, at times formed coalitions with the Ottomans.

After Lepanto, however, the war between Spaniards and the Turks subsided in importance, as the central front between Habsburgs and Ottomans shifted to central Europe. At the same time, several small Muslim states, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, emerged as piratical regimes plaguing commerce in the region, including Spanish shipping.[4]

Overall the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries went badly for both the Spanish and Ottoman empires. The rising strength of England, France, the Netherlands and other states paralleled the economic and military declines of Madrid and Istanbul. These developments led in the late eighteenth century to something unthinkable in previous centuries: a de facto alliance between Spain and the Ottomans. The 1782 treaty of friendship signaled the beginning of close ties between Spain and the Ottomans, a collaboration of friendly neutrals that endured until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of World War I. From confrontation, the two had become collaborators.

How was it possible, that in 1840 an Ottoman sultan could speak of the "constant friendship and positive agreement that exists and strengthens every day between our Sublime Porte and the Royal Court of Spain."[5] Even as the Ottomans and Spanish progressively lost more territory over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, their ties of commerce, trade and

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Denizcilik Tarihimizle Ilgili Ispanyol Belgelri." Las relaciones Turco-Españoles en los siglos XIV y XVI. Documentos Españoles relatives a la historia naval Otomana, Ankara 1995.

3 Kumrular, Ö., *Las relaciones entre el Imperio Otomano y la Monarquía Católica entre los años 1520-1535 y el papel de los estados satellites*, Istanbul 2003, pp.14-15.

4 Quataert, D., *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, Cambridge 2003, pp.38-41.

5 *Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperacion, Archivo General.* (AMAE). *H1770. Correspondencia. Embajadas y Legaciones. Turquia. 1834-1840,* Letter, 5 November 1840, Sultan Abdülmecid I to Queen Isabella II.

cooperation continued. In the aftermath of the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714), Spain's new Bourbon dynasty made a clear break from the Habsburg legacy and became a French ally. The two Bourbon dynasties, representing France and Spain, built upon obvious familial ties – Felipe V of Spain was really Phillipe Bourbon, grandson of Louis XIV – to import a wide range of French approaches to governance and foreign policy.

While the traditional enmity with the English remained as a guiding star in Spain's foreign policy, in the Mediterranean the Spanish Bourbons began to implement dramatic changes. While the Habsburgs had moved from hot war to cold peace in the 16th and 17th centuries in relation to the Ottoman Empire and its allies in the Mediterranean, the Bourbons accelerated this transformation. Within twenty-five years, they had negotiated a peace treaty between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Naples, a dependency of the Spanish crown. By the end of the eighteenth century Spain had become, not just a state at peace with the Ottoman Empire, but openly aligned with it through treaties and actions throughout the Mediterranean. The Spanish monarchs hoped to strengthen their ability to act independently by improving ties, perhaps even negotiating an alliance, with the Ottomans..[6]

There was precedent for a negotiated understanding between Spain and the Ottomans.[7] A peace treaty between the Turks and Naples, signed in 1740, officially ended more than two centuries of war. The king of Naples at the time would later become more famous as Charles III of Spain, and at his initiative the Italian state and Ottomans agreed to end centuries of hostility, promote trade, and collaborate to discourage piracy in the Mediterranean.[8]

Spain's interests coincided with those of the Ottomans. Istanbul was hoping that Spain could provide something else – closing of the Mediterranean to Russian warships, which might be sent from the tsar's Baltic or Pacific fleets in case of a conflict with the Ottoman Empire. Spain had initially hoped to gain a formal alliance, as well as a free hand in North Africa to act against the Barbary States and Morocco, but in the end the treaty was a more limited agreement. Negotiations began in 1779, with the dispatch of a Spanish diplomat to Istanbul, and lasted three years, typical given the complexities of maneuvering through Ottoman politics. As finally signed in 1782, it included provisions to encourage trade, extend mutual diplomatic recognition, explore additional forms of collaboration, and grant protections for Spanish merchants and citizens in the

6 Puell de la Villa, F., *Historia del Ejéricto en España*, Madrid 2009, pp.65-66.

7 Ochoa Brun, M.A., *Historia de la diplomacia española*, Madrid 2002, pp.148-149, 214, 265-266.

8 Stein, S. and B., *Apogee of Empire: Spain and New Spain in the Age of Charles III, 1759-1789*, Baltimore 2003, pp. viii, 23-24, 325-327.

Ottoman Empire. It also ended the state of war that had existed between the two states since the fifteenth century. In a gesture of goodwill, Spain sent a fleet of warships to Istanbul in 1784, the first friendly Spanish naval presence in Ottoman waters in history. Both sides expected this to be the opening step toward a more comprehensive relationship, and but political changes in both the Ottoman Empire and Spain, most notably the death of Charles III in 1788, and the coming of the French Revolution, ended movement in this direction.[9]

The existence of Muslim corsairs preying on Christian shipping was a key issue preventing warmer ties between the Ottoman Empire and Spain. Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli had for centuries practiced piracy against European shipping in the Mediterranean. Nominally Ottoman provinces, the three pirate kingdoms had long been de facto independent, but along with Istanbul preferred to maintain the convenient fiction of imperial ties. Not only did this allow these Barbary States to defer uncomfortable diplomatic requests – such as those that included ending piracy – it assuaged Ottoman sensibilities to be able to include these states on their map of imperial conquests.[10]

The real significance of the alignment of Spain and the Ottoman Empire during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was twofold: it enabled Spain to pursue more energetic action, both military and diplomatic, to bring an end to piracy against its shipping in the Mediterranean, after the 1780s with the blessings of the sultan. For the Sublime Porte, an alliance with a major European power validated the legitimacy of Ottoman sovereignty over North Africa. Other benefits for both included providing alternatives to French intervention on behalf of Catholics in the Empire, and creating potential markers for both Madrid and Istanbul, although these never developed.

Spain hoped to play the Ottoman card in the eighteenth century, leveraging a distant ally in aid of victories closer to home. The Ottomans hoped to replicate their earlier division of the Christian world, gaining one more ally among those who combined force could overwhelm it. The Spanish attempts to use an Ottoman alliance for its own regional benefit proved a weak reed upon which to base strategic hopes. Ottoman support for ending piracy in the Mediterranean did not convince its nominal provinces – Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli – to

9 Garrigues, E., *Un desliz diplomatic: la paz hispano-turca*, Madrid 1962, pp.25, 92-94, 121-124, 167-168, 172; Martín Asuero, P. ed. *España-Turquía: del enfrentamiento al análisis mutuo*, Istanbul 2003, p.255.

10 *Document. "Fascio N. 3094 – Tunisi. Regio Console. Diversi. 1840-1843."* Della Vecchia, "Impero Ottomano e Reggenza di Tunisi con inventario di documenti su Tunisi (1840-1860) conservati press l'Archivio di Stato di Napoli", Naples, Italy: Ministero della Pubblica Instruzione, 1991132-135. Quataert, The Ottoman Empire, p.87.

abandon this lucrative practice. Only the force of American and European navies and, in 1830, the French army, put an end to the corsairs. Spain also did not gain commercially, as the near absence of Spanish ships from Ottoman ports was mitigated only slightly by a tiny presence in trade, albeit carried by Greek, French, and British merchant vessels. Finally, Spain's ambition, dating back to the years of the *Reconquista*, of continuing its expansion into North Africa, was crippled by Spain's own hand. The abandonment of Oran, in exchange for commercial and security gains that never materialized, unnecessarily weakened Spain's claims, just decades before the European powers would begin to carve out empires.[11]

Spain's lost half century, from the late 1790s to the mid-1840s, saw lost battles, foreign occupation, civil wars, economic collapse, and colonial rebellions, which at the end left Spain as a shadow of what appeared to be a reviving power in the late eighteenth century. During the mid-nineteenth century, Spain briefly seemed to be on the rise internationally, with growing influence in Africa, Asia, and Europe, and even in Latin America.[12] A brief war in 1859-1860 against Morocco led to a Spanish victory and the seizure of territory.[13] In 1862, Spain built on its Mediterranean efforts with a treaty of commerce and navigation with the Ottoman Empire, which both expected would lead to improved trade and cooperation between the two states.[14] This built on the dispatch of Spanish envoys to Tunis and Tripoli in 1859 and 1863, respectively, as well as the establishment of a consulate in Ottoman-occupied Jerusalem.[15] The Ottoman Empire maintained a Legation in Madrid from 1857-1860, when

11 *Document. "Fascio N. 3095 – Tunisi. Regio Console. Diversi. 1844-1847."* Della Vecchia, "Impero Ottomano e Reggenza di Tunisi," pp.136-137.

12 Cortada, J.,*Spain and the American Civil War, Relations at Mid-Century, 1855-1868*, Philadelphia 1980, pp.3-8; Herrero, J.L., *El ejército español en el siglo XIX*, Madrid 1975, p.25; Rueda Hernanz, G., *Isabel II*, Madrid 2001, pp.213-214, 232; Headrick, D., *Ejército y política en España (1866-1898)*, Madrid 1981, pp.34-35, 46-47, 49, 270-271, 273.

13 *Tratado de Paz y Amistad entre S.M. Católica y S.M El Rey de Marruecos*, 26 April 1860. "Colección de los Tratados, Convenios y Documentos Internacionales" (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1894), pp.151-155.

14 *Tratado de Comercio y Navegación entre S.M. Católica y El Emperador de los Otomanos con sus tarifas anejas*, 13 March 1862, "Colección de los Tratados, Convenios y Documentos Internacionales" (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1894), pp. 324-337.

15 *Document. "Fascio N. 3099 – Tunisi. Regio Console. Diversi. 1859-1860."* Della Vecchia, "Impero Ottomano e Reggenza di Tunisi," pp.157-158; Ochoa Brun, M.A., *Historia de la diplomacia española*, Madrid 2000, pp. 206-207, 210, 265. *AMAE*, H1770, Letter, 9 December 1853, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Pio de Andres Garcia, Consul in Jerusalem. *AMAE*, H1774, Letter, 29 September 1860, Ottoman Foreign Minister to Gerardo de Souza, Consul in Istanbul, announcing closure of Legation in Madrid. Website, Embassy of the Republic of

financial exigencies forced it to close. Spanish diplomats predicted a flowering of trade with the Ottoman Empire, as well as opportunities for political gains, once Spain was able to focus on this region.[16]

Spanish diplomats urged their government to send a flotilla of Spanish warships to Istanbul, to encourage commerce and revive ties with a friendly nation. Given the presence of fleets from other nations in Ottoman waters, especially those from Britain, France, Italy and Russia, this would have demonstrated Spain's active interest in the region. The Spanish Foreign Ministry and Navy Ministry did discuss this suggestion several times, but it never came to fruition.[17] Spain had sent a few frigates to the Black Sea during the Crimean War, and although it remained neutral, sent an observer mission to the Balkans and Crimea. Spanish officials also allowed 1,500 volunteers to enlist in the Anglo-French armies specifically for that campaign.[18]

After the colonial losses of the Spanish American War in 1898, however, Spain returned to an interest in Morocco. In 1906, an international conference, led by the British, imposed the Treaty of Algeciras on Spain, which granted the French the majority of Morocco, leaving Spain with a resource-poor enclave in the northeast. Spain's decline relative to the other European powers, however, was not consistent. Unforeseen disasters, however, crippled these efforts, leaving Spain by the late nineteenth century stripped of the last of its overseas empire, except for a tiny cluster in North Africa.

The Ottoman Empire was one of the most successful in history. While recent historiography has focused on its decline, it is important to remember that for most of its history, this Turkish-led state was a serious military, political and economic power. It was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that Europeans began universally to consider the Ottomans as anything other than as a Great Power.[19] With a succession of defeats at the hands of the Russians in the late eighteenth century, however, many leaders within the Sublime Porte

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Turkey in Madrid <http://www.tcmadridbe.org/historia_embajada.htm>. Accessed 10 September 2009. The Ottoman legation reopened in 1881.

16 *AMAE*, H1770, Letter, 30 April 1870, Juan de Dios Rojas, Consulate Istanbul to Spanish Foreign Ministry, "Informe sobre el comercio de Constantinopla y Puertos del Mar Negro."

17 *AMAE*, H1770, Letter, 28 February 1871, Juan de Dios Rojas, Consulate Istanbul to Spanish Foreign Ministry; H1775, letter, 6 November 1866, Conde de Xiquerra, Consul in Istanbul, to Spanish Foreign Ministry.

18 Martín Asuero, P., *Estambul, el ejército otomano y los sefardíes en textos en español*, Istanbul 2003, p.115.

19 Cirakman, A., *From the 'Terror of the World' to the 'Sick Man of Europe:' European Images of Ottoman Empire and Society from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth*, New York 2002, pp. 3-5, 78, 164, 217.

realized that they could not continue without serious internal reforms and external changes. Initial efforts to reform, as early as the 1770s, crashed against the opposition of two powerful forces: the *ulema*, the councils of Muslim clerics, and the *janissaries*, traditional warriors. By the 1820s, the Ottoman Empire began a century and half of efforts, from transformative to nominal, to revive and strengthen the Ottoman Empire.[20] Spanish diplomats, in their observations of Ottoman reforms, noted dramatic gains: "This government continues to dedicate itself to reform public administration at all levels and to assimilate European civilization in every way that is compatible with religious traditions."[21]

One area where the Ottomans attempted to achieve gains was in their relationship to North Africa. Unlike nearly every other territory of the Ottomans, gained through wars of conquest, their three North African vassals, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, had come into to the empire of their own volition, requesting Ottoman protection from the fearsome Spaniards in the sixteenth century. The Ottomans had been delighted to accept three new provinces into their empire at little cost, and dispatched governors to Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. At the same time, Istanbul sent garrisons, mostly janissaries, to buttress their occupation and deter Spanish aggression. In 1574, the Ottoman navy overthrew a Tunisian ally of Spain, replacing it with its own vassal.[22]

By the 1650s, however, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli were independent in everything but name. The three Barbary States, as well, preferred to maintain the fiction of Ottoman overlordship for their own reasons. As kingdoms financially dependent on piracy, they could at least nominally count on Ottoman interdiction of major offensives against that piracy, and could also demur against proposed treaties, arguing that as mere provinces of the sultan, they could not enter into agreements with foreign powers without his consent. When the Ottoman connection to its provinces was tested in a serious way, however, it proved a fragile thing. During the 1830 French invasion of Algeria, the Ottomans proved unable to intercede on behalf of Algiers.[23]

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20 Della Vecchia, "Impero Ottomano e Reggenza di Tunisi), 6-8. Hanioğlu, "A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire," pp.44-48, 57-60; Comisión Española de Historia de las Relaciones Internacionales, *Cuadernos de Historia de las Relaciones Internacionales*, Madrid, pp.15-16.

21 *AMAE*, H1770, letter, 26 May 1840, Antonio Lopez de Córdoba, Spanish Legation, Istanbul, to Evaristo Perez de Castro, Foreign Ministry, Madrid.

22 Della Vecchia, "Impero Ottomano e Reggenza di Tunisi," pp.40, 41-45, 47-50; Şükrü Hanioğlu, M., *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, Princeton 2008, pp.9-10.

23 Della Vecchia, "Impero Ottomano e Reggenza di Tunisi," 9. Hanioğlu, "A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire," 9.

While Algiers was a lost cause, this was not true for the last of the Ottoman provinces in North Africa: Tripoli. This territory, modern-day Libya, had long been associated with the Ottomans. In 1835, seeing what had happened to Algiers, the Ottomans and local Arab leaders of Tripoli agreed to reestablish direct Turkish rule. The province remained in Ottoman hands until just before World War I, when Italy seized the colony from the Turks, after a brief war won by the Italians. The loss of Libya to Italy in 1912 was a bitter event for the Ottomans. As World War I would demonstrate, however, betrayal of allies came easy for the Italian state.[24]

The Ottomans also improved ties with Tunis in the nineteenth century, in the face of obvious French ambitions on the territory. A civil war in Tunis prompted the Ottomans to dispatch a high-level diplomat, Haydar Efendi to the North African state. The diplomat offered to mediate between two claimants to the office of *bey* (governor), to end the fighting between Muslim factions. One Spanish diplomat noted that until the arrival of Efendi, relations between Istanbul and "its ancient dependency have completely ceased, recently reduced to the *firman* (decree) naming the new Bey and the tribute paid to Istanbul by the Beys." Efendi's arrival on an Ottoman frigate did not bring an immediate end to the conflict, but it did renew a more permanent Turkish presence.[25] The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 and its aftermath, however, resulted in the loss of Cyprus, most of the Balkans, and land along the Russian border.[26]

When World War I began, the Ottoman Empire was stronger than it had been both internally and externally, in almost two hundred years. Its army was more modern, its state more centralized, its revenues higher. The war and its aftermath, however, destroyed the Ottoman Empire. Spain was neutral in the conflict, but its importance to European and Mediterranean affairs had long since diminished to the level of other minor states. The efforts of both Spain and the Ottoman Empire to claw their way back into Great Power status, to revive their imperial fortunes, and to remain imperial powers in an age of imperialism, failed. The frustration of these attempts does not mean their relative decline was inevitable; as this research has shown, both empires took opportunities to expand their strength and reach. The relative decline owed at least as much to shifts in global trade and interest from the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean to the Atlantic and Pacific, a process that began as early as

24 Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Ottoman Empire*, pp.9-11.

25 *AMAE*, H1775, Letter, 4 May 1864, Pedro Sorela y Maury, Consul in Istanbul, to Spanish Foreign Ministry.

26 Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Ottoman Empire*, pp.121-123, 129-132.

the sixteenth century, as to any particular errors committed in Istanbul or Madrid.[27] That they were able to take these risks and achieve gains, illustrates the lack of causality in history, as well as the complexity of the history of empires, especially in the Mediterranean, the birthplace and graveyard of so many imperial dreams.

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27 Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, p.233.

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PART 2

Weapons & Armour

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CHAPTER 5

A Sixth or Early Seventh Century AD Iconography of Roman Military Equipment in Egypt: The Deir Abou Hennis Frescoes

*Raffaele D'Amato**

Introduction

At the south corner of the ancient city of Antinoe, the entirely Christian village of Deir Abou Hennis ("Monastery of Father John") hides a precious treasury of Coptic art and architecture, first witnessed by Jomard,[1] then explored and described by Cledat in 1902.[2] The most striking of these monuments is the cave Church (*kenyset*) at the top of the mountain above the village, with its cycle of sixth to seventh century frescoes[3] taken from the Canonical and Apocriphal Gospels, representing scenes from the childhood and life of Jesus Christ.[4]

In this essay, I will not deal with the style of the frescoes, nor with their quality from the artistic point of view. Instead the purpose of this text is to analyze the military costumes represented in the frescoes, from the archaeological and

* The author would like to thank Dr. Ashraf Nageh, of the Coptic Museum in Cairo, for the help in the organization of the travel to Abu-Hennis, as well as the whole community and the clergy of the Village, who provided a marvellous assistance and help in loco during the visit and the work inside the Chapel. A special thanks must also be given to Prof. Georgios Theotokis, who reviewed the English version of the text, and, for the special permission to reproduce here the helmets from Koblenz and Balkans, Dr. Christian Miks of Mainz Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Dr. Martin Rasch Mainz of Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum and Dr. Peter Henrich of Department of Archaeological heritage at Koblenz (GDKE).

1 Jomard, E.F. description d'Antinoé in *Déscription de L'Ėgypte ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Egypte pendant L'Ėxpedition de L'Armée Française*, IV, 1821, p. 274.

2 Cledat, J., Notes Archéologiques et philologiques, in *BIFAO* 2 (1902) pp. 41-70.

3 Cledat, 1902, pp. 47,52; the author based his datation (early half of seventh century AD) on the presence, in the Abu Hennis cycle, of the painted images of Saint Domitian, bishop in 507 AD, and Saint Makarios the great, who lived in the sixth century AD; Zibawi dates the cycle of the histories of the childhood of Christ to the sixth century AD, the cycle of Zacharias to the seventh century AD, s. Zibawi, M., *L'arte copta, l'Egitto Cristiano dalle origini al XVIII secolo*, Milano,2003, pp. 58, 63.

4 Clèdat, 1902, pp. 47-54, pls. I-V; De Bock, M.W., *Materiaux pour servir à l'archéologie de L'Ėgypte chrétienne*, San Petersburg, 1901.

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philological perspective. The evidence of the artistic sources in Coptic art related to the scenes of Old and New Testament representing soldiers or warriors, is a fundamental element for a better analysis of the military lifestyle and material culture of the Late Period of Roman rule in Egypt. The frescoes of Deir Abou Hennis, if compared with the textile material found in Antinoe, Bawit and other localities, together with the scarce fragments of the weapons found on the Egyptian territory and in other corners of the Empire, are of a great value for the reconstruction of the true image of the Roman warrior in Late-Antiquity Egypt.

Analysis of the fresco figures demonstrates a nearly perfect correspondence between them and other artistic representations in the archaeological record and the literary sources related to armours, helmets, offensive and defensive weapons and military clothing of the sixth to seventh centuries AD.

Figures Description. Clothing and Equipment

From the church entrance the legend of the frescoes begins with the wall on the left, representing the killing of the Innocents. King Herod (identified as ⲏⲣⲱⲇⲏⲥ – *Irotis* in the Coptic inscription over his head) sits upon a military field-chair (*sella*)[5] without a back support, like a true Roman commander on the battlefield (Fig. 5.1). In his right hand he seems to be holding a spear

5 I.e. a chair without back and arms, but fitted with a pillow, s. Daremberg, C., E. Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines*, Paris, 1873-1917, col. 1179, s.v. *sella*, derived from the *sella curulis* of the Roman Magistrate and transformed in the military *sella castrensis*, placed for the commander in chief on the Tribunal where he pronounced his speeches to the troops (Suet., *Galba*, XVIII s. Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars – De Vita Caesarum* , Latin and English text in The lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, in two volumes, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press 1914, translated by J.C.Rolfe). It was used in the Roman Army at least since the time of the Etruscan Kings and until the end of the Eastern Roman Empire, where it took the name of σελλα or καθεδρα (Iohannes Lydus, De Mag., I, 33,18 s. Lydus, *On the Magistrates – De Magistratibus Reipublicae Romanae* – Περί αρχών της Ρωμαίων πολιτείας, Stuttgart, 1967, Greek text) if furnished with arms and back. Beautiful specimens of pliable metallic Roman military field chairs of fifth to seventh centuries AD, decorated with agemina, have been found in the grave 5 of Necropolis of Nocera Umbra, s. Various, *Umbria Longobarda, La necropoli di Nocera Umbra nel centenario della scoperta*, Roma, 1997, pp. 119-125 figs. 46-49 ; in Sardis, s. Walbaum, 1984, pp. 78 ss., in Walbaum, J.C., *Metalwork from Sardis : the finds through 1974*, Sardis monograph 8, Cambridge, 1984 ; a silvered military field *sella* of some High Late Roman officer (fifth century AD) is also preserved in the Hermitage Museum, s. Various, *Byzantine Art in СССР collections* (*Искусство Византии в собраниx СССР*), Moscow 1977, in Russian, 2 vol., I, p. 59, n. 42.

FIGURE 5.1 *Abu Hennis – The Massacre of the Innocents – Herodes and the Soldiers,* AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

(*kontos, contus, doru*),[6] although his position is very controversal. Beside him two bodyguards (*Doryphoroi*)[7] are standing, dressed in white and blue military tunics (*imatia, tunicae*),[8] decorated with purple *segmenti*[9] and armed with big oval shields (*clipei*)[10] and spears (*pila*).[11] One of them is wearing plate armour

6 Ravegnani, *Soldati di Bisanzio in Età Giustinianea*, Roma, 1988 p. 46; s. *Anonymi Byzantini Peri Strategikes* (*An. De Re Strat.*), in "*Three byzantine military treatises*", text, translation and notes by Georges T.Dennis, Washington, 1985, 16, p. 54. The spear worn by the military commander (*hasta summa imperii*) was the main symbol of the supreme power over the army since early Roman Age, and *insignia* visibile on the hands of the Late Roman Emperors as military leaders, s. Wessel, K., 'Insignien', *Reallexicon zur byzantinischen Kunst* 3 (1973-1975) 369-498, p. 416.

7 Ravegnani, 1988, p. 14.

8 Procopius, *History of the Wars*, London, 1911, Book IV, 23,22; Corippus, *Iohannidos seu de bellis libycis libri VIII*, Cambridge, 1970, II, 130;

9 D'Amato R. – Sumner G., *Roman military clothing III*, Oxford, 2005, pp. 4, 16;

10 Corippus, *In Laudem Justini – Eloge de l'Empereur Justin II*, Paris, 1981, IV, 240;

11 Corippus, *In Laudem Justini*, IV, 242;

(*thorax heroikon*)[12] furnished with a separated somewhat round shoulder-guard (*umerale*).[13] Their heads are covered with crested helmets (*cassis, περικεφαλαια*)[14], with red plumes on the top.

Three other Roman soldiers follow (Figs. 5.2-5.4), armed with short swords or long battle knives (*semi-spathae*).[15] They are performing with brutal efficiency the murderous duty ordered by the King. This image recalls in a dramatic way the massacre of the civilian monophysite Coptic population by the Orthodox Roman soldiers of the Imperial Governor echoed in the description of the authors like John of Nikiu.[16]

The first soldier (Fig. 5.2), who is holding the feet of the baby about to be slaughtered, is dressed in a long sleeved 'Gothic' fitted tunic, lightly closed by the belt (*zostarion*).[17] The tunic is of dark blue colour with red trimmed

12 Procopius, *Buildings*, London, 1940 (1996) I,ii, 9-12;

13 Justinian (Just.), *Digest or Pandects Digestum Novum seu Pandectarum Juris Civilis* (*Dig.*) Latin text in *Iustiniani Digesta*, *Corpus Iuris Civilis* I, ed. T. Mommsen-P.Krueger, Berlin, 1954; English text in *The Digest or Pandects of Justinian*, translated by S.P. Scott, Cincinnati, 1932; 49,16-14: "*Arma alienasse grave crimen est et ea culpa desertioni exaequatur, utique si tota alienavit: sed et si partem eorum, nisi quod interest. nam si tibiale vel* ***umerale*** *alienavit, castigari verberibus debet, si vero loricam scutum galeam gladium, desertori similis est. tironi in hoc crimine facilius parcetur armorumque custodi plerumque ea culpa imputatur, si arma militi commisit non suo tempore*" i.e. "*It is a serious crime for a soldier to sell his arms, and it is considered equal to that of desertion where he disposes of all of them, but if he only sells a portion, his punishment will depend upon what he sold. For if he sells the armor for his legs or shoulders, he shall be punished by scourging; if, however, he sells his breast-plate, his shield, his helmet, and his sword, he resembles a deserter. A new recruit is more readily pardoned for this crime, and generally the custodian of the arms is to blame if he gave them to the soldier at an improper time*".

14 Corippus, *Iohannidos*, IV, 459-460; *Anon. De Re Strat.*, 16, p. 53;

15 Nov. Just 85,4: "*Prohibemus enim privatos operari et emere arcus et sagittas et spathas et enses* (*quae vocare consueverunt* ***semispathia***) *et quae vocantur zavae sive loricae, et contos et quolibet modo vel figura factas lanceas, et quae apud Isauros nominantur monocontia, et appellatos siginnos seu missibilia, insuper et aspides sive scuta et galeas seu cassides*" i.e. "*We prohibit private individuals from either making or buying bows, arrows, double-edged swords, short swords* (*weapons usually called* ***semi-spathae***), *those styled zabes, breast-plates, javelins, lances and spears of every shape whatever, arms called by the Isaurians monocontia, others called sitinnes, or missiles, shields, and helmets*".

16 "*… When the troops heard of these doings they were all enraged, and set out on horseback and made preparation for fighting, and they slew many people in the church* (*and continued the slaughter*) *till they had filled all the edifices with blood. And this frightful massacre extended to Palestine and Egypt*…." s. John of Nikiu CIV, 3-4; in John, Bishop of Nikiu: *Chronicle*. London, 1916 (english Translation).

17 Pseudo-Maurikios, Strategikon, in G.T. Dennis-E.Gamillscheg, *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, *CFHB* 17, Wien 1981, XIIB, 1,1ff., "… ζωσταρια Γωτθικα …" i.e. Gothic Tunics;

FIGURE 5.2
Abu Hennis – The Massacre of the Innocents – The first executioner, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

FIGURE 5.3
Abu Hennis – The Massacre of the Innocents – The second executioner, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

FIGURE 5.4
Abu Hennis – The Massacre of the Innocents – The third executioner, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

embroidery around the neck, coming down to the shoulders and the sleeves. On the wrist cuffs three segments (*segmenta*) of red colour are arranged vertically, the same way as on the tunics of Late Roman Soldiers in other frescoes representing the same biblical episode.[18] Although badly damaged, it is clear[19] that this tunic ends with a ζωμα divided in three parts, with a wide triangular cloth panel protecting the groins and the genitals, like the Persian tunics of the three Kings visiting Jesus Christ in Saint Apollinare Nuovo mosaic in Ravenna,[20] or the Persian costume representing the Prophet Daniel in Late-Roman mosaics of North-Africa and Egypt.[21] The folds of the tunic are realised in such a way

18 Like in the frescoes of the Pantheon of Santa Maria in Stelle, near Verona, s. Antolini, L., *L'ipogeo di Santa Maria in Stelle*, Verona, 1995, pp. 48-50; D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, p. 9;

19 This was much more visible in plate I of Cledat's work;

20 Bottari, S., Ravenna, *basiliche di Sant'Apollinare Nuovo e di Sant'Apollinare in Classe*, in *Tesori d'Arte Cristiana*, 6, Bologna, 1966, p. 148 figs. 1,2;

21 Mosaic of Gafsa, fifth to sixth century AD, in Ville, G., 'Recherches sur le costume dans l'Afrique romaine – le pantalon'in *Africa*, II, (1965-1966), 139-148, fig. 10; fresco of the Red Monastery at Sohag, sixth century, in Gabra G. – Van Loon G.J.M., *The Churches of Egypt from the Journey of the Holy Family to the present day,* Cairo, 2007, pp. 282-283;

because the tunic was lightly closed around the waist by a belt, and the lower parts of it were drawn up and kept strictly closed by the military *zoni*[22] to allow the man to move easier.

The dark blue trousers of the man belong to the typology of the Persian trousers called *sarabara, saravar*,[23] decorated with a wide band of gold trimming running vertically on the front.

The only part still visible of his military equipment is the pommel of his *semi-spatha*, of brown colour (wood?) and elliptical shape.

The second warrior (Fig. 5.3) wears a very similar tunic, but with different colours. The main colour of the garment is off-white, which along with red was typical in Late-Roman military units.[24] The tunic is decorated with the same type of embroidery as that of the first soldier, but this time the trimming is red on a blue or black background. The cuffs are decorated with the same pattern, but this time the embroidery is not divided in *segmenta* covering completely the wrist of the tunic. Very little is visible of his trousers, that seem be off-white like the tunic. He differs from his companions in that the short single-edged sword with its characteristic blunt point is evident.

The iconography of the third soldier (Fig. 5.4) reflects the story of the attempted killing of the child John the Baptist because the name of the child he wants to seize is ΙΩΑΝΝΗC- *Iohannes,* and he is held by his mother ΕΛΙCΕΑ(ΒΕΤ) ***Eliseabeth*** on the knees. This is one of the earliest representations of the subject, which is derived from the Apocryphal Gospels, and which went on to be very popular in the Eastern frescoes of Byzantium and Kappadokia.[25] The dress of the soldier, identical to that of the other two, is completely red, decorated on the shoulders by yellow embroidery. Traces of his light blue trousers (*anaxyrida*) are still visible, as well as the blade of his *semi-spatha*.

All the three soldiers are bearded and wear long hairs, while – although they face is very damaged – the bodyguards of Herodes are shaved. This can be an indication of the Germanic or even Isaurian origin of the models from which the unknown painter of the fresco copied the murderers.

For the purpose of our analysis there is still another interesting figure (Fig. 5.5), not really dressed like a soldier, but holding a sword in his hand.

22 Procopius, *History of the Wars*, IV,9;

23 Bielajev, N.M., 'Decoration of the late-Roman and early-Byzantine tunics', in *Recueil d'etudes, dédiées à la memoire de NP Kondakov,* Praha 1926, 201-228, (in Russian) pp. 207-208; D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 19,47;

24 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 9-10;

25 Thierry, N., *La Cappadoce de l'antiquité au Moyen Age*, Turnhout, 2002, s. p. 148 (Bahattin Kilise, at Peristrema, ninth to tenth centuries AD);

FIGURE 5.5
Abu Hennis – The Massacre of the Innocents – The killer of Zacharias, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

Another man begs before him on his knees. This kneeling man is called **ZAXAPAC**, and he was probably intended to represent Zacharias, the Priest father of Saint John the Baptist. The episode of his killing by the Jews has its roots in the apocryphal tradition, preserved in the Proto-Gospel of James, a text of the second century AD,[26] which was related by Origen to the episode

26 B.D. Erhman, *I Cristianesimi perduti, Apocrifi, sette ed eretici nella battaglia per le Sacre Scritture*, Roma, 2005, p. 11;

mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew and Luke,[27] where Jesus speaks to the Pharisees and Scribes about a certain Zacharias:

[*34*] *Therefore, behold, I send to you prophets, wise men, and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify; and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city;*
[*35*] *that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah, whom you killed between the sanctuary and the altar.*

Zacharias was killed by the Jews between the sanctuary and the altar, which is how the murder is represented in the fresco; modern scholars identify the victim mentioned by Jesus as Zacharias son of Jobaida, prophet of the Old Testament,[28] However, early Christian tradition identified the figure as the Father of John the Baptist, as in the inscription found in the so-called Absalon tomb at Jerusalem.[29] and as illustrated in the Cappadocian frescoes.[30]

The costume of the murderer is not that of a Roman soldier, but of a High Functionary, or maybe of an Imperial Court Officer, wearing a long robe (*sticharion*) of off-white and yellowish colour with wide red embroidery around the neck (*maniakion*). The wide tunic, a sort of *armilausion* with sleeves short to the elbows, is worn over a second inner tunic (*kamision*), of grey-blue shade, and his ζωμα is mainly red. Considering that in the Proto-Gospel of James the killing of Zacharias was carried out by the officers sent by the King, the model for the man could be a High *Officialis* of Roman Egypt. The sword of the man, placed in a horizontal way and very damaged, has the shape of the same *semispatha* of the other soldiers of the fresco.

The scene of the massacre of the innocent in Abu Hennis is an important iconographical source for the Late Roman infantry equipment, because the artists, in the representation of the biblical scenes, used real soldiers, dressed according to the fashion of the age, as their models. This will be very clear if we

27 Mt, Gospel, 23,34-35: διὰ τοῦτο ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω πρὸς ὑμᾶς προφήτας καὶ σοφοὺς καὶ γραμματεῖς: ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀποκτενεῖτε καὶ σταυρώσετε, καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν μαστιγώσετε ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ὑμῶν καὶ διώξετε ἀπὸ πόλεως εἰς πόλιν: ὅπως ἔλθῃ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς πᾶν αἷμα δίκαιον ἐκχυννόμενον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος Αβελ τοῦ δικαίου ἕως τοῦ αἵματος Ζαχαρίου υἱοῦ Βαραχίου, ὃν ἐφονεύσατε μεταξὺ τοῦ ναοῦ καὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου. Lc., Gospel, 11,49-51;

28 Bastia, G., 'Zaccaria, figlio di Barachia, ucciso tra il Santuario e l'altare', in *Scienze Antiche*, 2008, s. <http://digilander.libero.it/Hard_Rain/Il%20problema%20di%20Zaccaria.pdf>.

29 Puech, E., 'Le tombeau de Zacharie et Siméon au monument funéraire dit d'Absalon dans la vallée de Josaphat', in *Revue Biblique*, 110,3,2003, pp. 321-335;

30 Thierry, 2002, p. 148 (Bahattin Kilise, at Peristrema, ninth to tenth centuries AD);

compare the details of the frescoes with archaeological specimens of the weapons and clothing of late Roman infantrymen in Egypt and beyond.

We should consider, first of all, that the Roman imperial soldier was not a warrior universally equipped in the same way, in all the regions of the Empire. Climatic differences, local influences, lack of the concept of military uniform, produced variety of accoutrements across the Empire, although there were always common features. Obviously different equipment depended also on different specialities, ranks and functions in the army. We will begin our analysis with the represented weaponry, and after we will turn our attention to the clothing worn by the soldiers in the fresco.

The Representation of Late-Roman Military Equipment: Defensive and Offensive Equipment

The complete defensive equipment of the Roman infantryman at the turn of fourth to seventh centuries AD, consisted of a steel helmet (κασσις, κασσιδιον, cassis, περικεφαλαια)[31] or head coverings made of felt or leather[32] ; a breastplate (thorax, θωραξ)[33] in iron,[34] leather, or iron or bronze scales (squama, thorax squamis fulgentibus)[35]; chain mail (lorikion or zaba),[36] worn upon a padded garment often furnished with lappets and lambrequins (thoracomacus, περιστηθιδιον)[37] made of felt or coarse silk (pteryges, cymation, kremasmata);[38]

31 Corippus., *Iohannidos.*, IV, 180; *Anon. De re strat.*, 16 p. 52; Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strategikon.*, I, 2; XIIB-4;

32 *Anon. De re strat.*, 16 p. 55;

33 Corippus, *Johannidos.*, IV, 535; Anon. *De re strat.*, 16 p. 55;

34 *Anon. De re strat.*, 16 p. 57;

35 Corippus., *Johannidos*, IV, 493, 535-536; Isidorus of Seville, in his *Origines* (*Or.*) – *Isidori Hispaniensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum libri XX*, ed. W.M. Lindsay I-II, Oxford, 1911-XVIII, 13,2, writing in the sixth century AD, calls *squama* the "*metal armour* (*lorica ferrea*) *composed by iron or bronze interlaced scales* (*laminae*)". So *squama* was also the word referred to the whole scale or lamellar armour.

36 Isidorus, Or., XVIII, 13; s. also Kolias, T., *Byzantinische Waffen*, Wien, 1988, p. 39 and Ravegnani, 1988, p. 46;

37 Anonymus, *De Rebus Bellicis,* ed. Andrea Giardina, Anonimo, *Le cose della Guerra*, Milano, 1996, cap. 15; *Anon. De re strat.*, 16, p. 57;

38 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 23-24; the word's meaning is literally "hanging pieces" and it is used in *Praecepta Militaria* III, 4 and in the *Taktika* of Nikephoros Ouranos 60, 4 to indicate the padded and quilted skirts made of cotton or coarse silk (*κουκολιον* and *βαμβακιον*) hanging below a soldier's cuirass to protect his legs. S. *Nikephoros Ouranos Tactica*, in E. McGeer, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth, Byzantine warfare in the 10th century* , Dumbarton

greaves (περικνεμιδαι);[39] different kind of shields (σκουταριον, scutum, ασπις).[40]

The offensive equipment consisted of various kinds of swords (*spathion, spatha, ensis, semi-spatha, semispathion, gladius latus, ξιφος , παραμηριον, ερουλισκιον, μαχαιρα*)[41] kept in a scabbard (*vagina, θηκη*)[42] and a dagger (*ξιφιδιον*),[43] together the composite bow (*τοξον*, *arcus*) also used by heavy and light cavalry,[44] and different kinds of javelins and spears *κονταριον, κοντος, δορυ, sarissa, contus, longa hasta, akontia, doratia, zybinnoi, missilia, specula, veruta*)[45] variously employed by infantrymen and cavalrymen.

Some of these elements of weaponry are well represented, in their specific shape, on the frescoes of Abu Hennis. The precision of the unknown painter whose details correspond to surviving artefacts and literary descriptions, is astonishing. Some scholars have raised doubts about such artistic evidence, but such scepticism cannot be sustained in this case.[46]

Oaks Paper XXXIII, Washington, 1995, pp. 113-115. They looked apron like and this can explain the archaic Roman appearance of many warriors represented in the art, see for example the Triptych Harbaville in the Shuvalov Collection (Inv. Hermitage no. w ; s. Bank, A., *Byzantine Art in the collections of the USSR*, Leningrad-Moscow 1985, ff. 126-131);

39 *Anon. De re strat*., 16, pp. 53-55;

40 *Anon. De re Strat.* p. 53; Pseudo-Maurikios., *Strategikon*. III 1, 10-14; Isidorus, *Or.* XVIII, 12,4;

41 Ravegnani, 1988, p. 45; Corippus. *Johannidos*. IV 497; Isidorus *Or*., XVIII, 6, 3-5.; Vegetius., Military Art – *Epitoma Rei Militaris/De Re Militari* (*Epit.*) in Vegetius *Epitoma Rei Militaris*, ed. M.D. Reeve, Oxford, 2004, II, 15; Procopius, History of the Wars, IV, 28, 29; Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strategikon*., I, 2; XIIB-4;

42 Corippus. *Johannidos*, IV 497; Procopius, *History of the Wars*, IV, 28, 22;

43 Procopius, *History of the wars*, VI, 8,9 and 15;

44 Ravegnani, 1988, p. 45; Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strategikon*, I, 2; Vegetius, Ep., I, 15-16;

45 Kolias, 1988, pp. 185 ff.; Ravegnani, 1988, p. 46; Corippus. *Johannidos*, IV, 481, 541; Agathias, *Historiae*, I,9,1; II, 8,1; II, 9, 10; III, 18, 5-6; III 20,9; III, 25,5; V, 1,7 in *Agathiae Myrinae Historiarum libri quinque*, rec. R. Keydell, Berolini, 1967, in CFHB,2; *Anon. De re strat*., 16, p. 54; Procopius., History of the wars, V, 29, 42; Vegetius., *Ep*., I, 20; II, 15;

46 S. Parani, Maria G., *Reconstructing the reality of the images, Byzantine Material culture and religious iconography, 11th-15th century,* Leiden-Boston, 2003, pp. 151,155; Nicolle, D., 'Arms, armour and horse harnesses in the Parma Baptistery painted ceiling' in Nicolle, D., *Warriors and their weapons around the time of the Crusades, Relationships between Byzantium, the West and the Islamic world,* Padstow,2002, XI-1-17, p.7; Bartusis, M.C., *The Late Byzantine army, arms and society, 1204-1453*, Philadelphia, 1992, pp. 323-324;

The Helmets

The two guardsmen of Herodes have their heads covered with metallic, probably steel, helmets. Their bowl is rounded (Fig. 5.6) and half conical (Fig. 5.7) and fitted with a wide protection for the neck, that seems to be made of only one piece. The bad state of the painting does not allow us to understand if it was intended to be as attached or separated from the bowl. A rim is represented on both helmets at the height of the brow, intended to represent the brow-band of the helmet. The cheek-pieces are not visible, but again we cannot say if they were or not represented because the main parts of the faces of the warriors have been lost. The red plumes are clearly seen, attached to the top of the helmets, presumably made of horse hairs or ox tufts (τουφια).[47]

The first literary confirmation of the crest colour of the Roman Helmets of the Abu Hennis paintings comes from Corippus: In the ceremony of 565 AD, at the elevation of Justin II, the 300[48] *Eskoubitores* of the Imperial Guard are described armed with gilded spears (*pila*) and shields of round shape (*aspida*), double-axes, swords and gilded helmets (*cassis aurea*), surmounted by a red plume.[49] Although the warriors of Abu Hennis were probably copied from Egyptian garrisons, it is highly probable that the guardsmen of the Provincial Governors or local *Duces* imitated the uniforms of the Imperial Guardsmen.

The shape of the helmet of the man on the right of the King is a Late-Attic type. This ancient Greco-Roman type was still in use, although the only Late Roman examples come from Richborough fortress in Britain, and from Egypt (the helm has a brow-band embossed with religious scenes)[50]. These helmets, still produced in the Eastern *fabricae* of the Empire,[51] are most commonly represented on reliefs and mosaics, and are wrongly considered to be artistic convention. Their shape on the Late-Roman monuments is in fact different

47 Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strategikon*, I,2,12; XII, B4,3 and Isidorus, *Or.*, XVIII, 14, mention small plumes at the top of the helmets (*τουφια μικρα, tufia*), obviously connected also with the presence of crest-holders; s. also Kolias, 1988, p. 81 n. 41; Kosmas Indikopleustès precises, writing in sixth century AD, as these *τουφα* were done with hairs of the wild Indian Oxes, s. Cosmas Indikopleustès, *Topographie Chrétienne*, ed. W. Wolska-Conus III, Paris, 1973, p. 323;

48 Lydus, *De Mag.*, I, 16,1 ;

49 Cor., *In laudem Justini*, III, 168, 239, 241-242: "*… scuta aurea cernunt pilaque suspiciunt alto splendentia ferro aurea et auratos conos cristaque rubentes …*" i.e. "*… they look at the golden shields, and fix their eyes upon the gilded javelins shining highly of iron upon the golden helmets, furnished of red plumes …*"

50 Flinders Petrie, W.M., 'Objects of Daily Use', in *British School of Archaeology* 42. London: 1927 pl. IV, nr. 32;

51 Macdowall, S., *Late Roman Infantryman 236-565 AD*, Oxford, 1994, pp. 53, 58;

FIGURE 5.6
Abu Hennis – The Massacre of the Innocents – Detail of the helmet of the Guard at the right side of the King, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

FIGURE 5.7
Abu Hennis – The Massacre of the Innocents – Detail of the Guard at the left side of the King, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

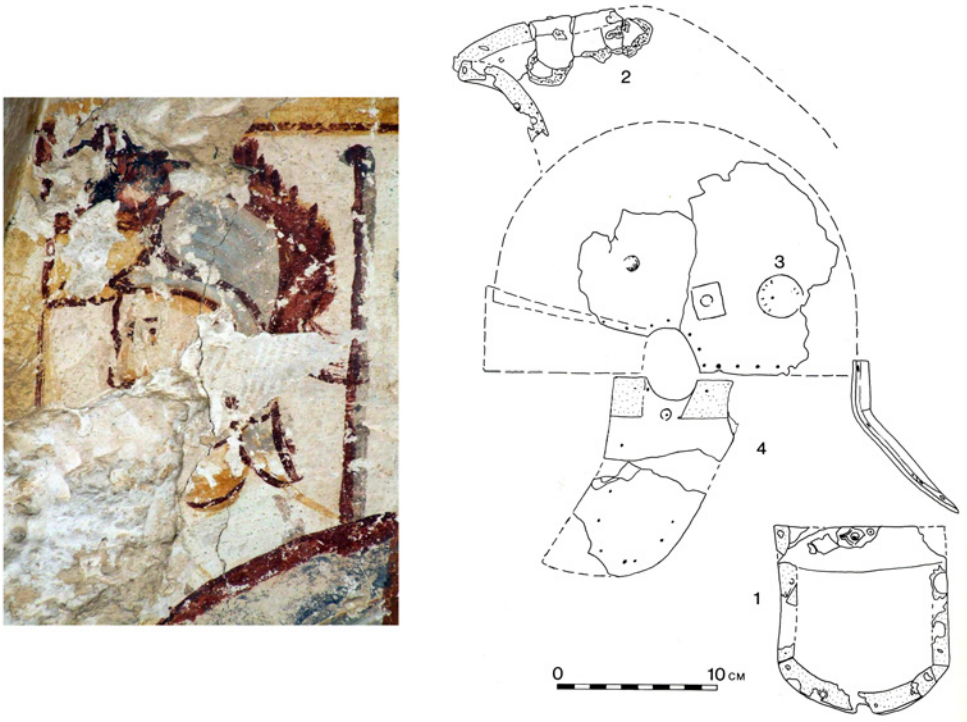

FIGURE 5.8 *Comparison among the helmet of Richborough and the helmet on the painting; a) author's photo b) ex Lyne.*

enough from their classical prototype: the helmet is sometimes formed by a single-piece skull, often separated cheek-guards (*bucculae*) and neck-protection, this latter however is sometimes directly attached to the skull. In detail the helmet represented in the Abu Hennis painting seems to be very similar to the first specimen of Richborough,[52] in iron with bronze applications, half way between *Intercisa*[53] and attic type : it has a three fold *crista*, i.e. a three-dimensional metallic crest holder, sided by a gilded plate to which two ranges of plumes (*tufae*) could be attached like shown in the mosaics of Santa Maria Maggiore.[54] The metallic crest had a riveted copper alloy strip, and the plumes were attached by means of gypsum faced with resina, and in any-case brown

52 Lyne, M., 'Late-Roman helmet fragments from Richborough', in *JRMES*, 5, 1994, pp. 94-105, fig. 1; reconstruction in D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pl. A2;

53 Klumbach, H., *Spätrömische Gardehelme*, München, 1973, pp. 103-109, pls. 45-47;

54 Hubert, J. – Porcher, J. – Volbach, W.F., *L'Europa delle invasioni barbariche*, Milan, 1968, fig. 123;

FIGURE 5.9 *Procession of soldiers and military commander, Ivory plaque, VI century AD, Trier, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, ex McDowall.*

paint. The helmet had a cut for the ear and small holes around the lower edge for attachment of the cheek-piece and the lining of leather. The skull was divided in two parts as in the late *Intercisa* specimens by a nailed segment. Cheek pieces had rivet holes for the attachment of the internal lining (Fig. 5.8).

Development of the Pseudo-Attic helmet is visible on various sixth century AD ivory works from Egypt, where soldiers wear the same helmet as in our fresco. This is perfectly evident, for instance, on the ivory preserved in the Rheinisches Landesmuseum of Trier, where a procession of infantrymen and cavalrymen led by *Magister Militum* (Fig. 5.9) is represented, or on the ivory Pixis of Aghios Menas preserved in the British museum (Fig. 5.10), or again on the Cathedra of Maximianus in Ravenna.[55] On the Maximianus cathedra some of the helmets have a frontal cannule for the insertion of three distinguishing plumes. This helmet is a version of those worn by the *Cornuti Seniores* seen on the Constantine arch,[56] and was not only the prototype of the Dark-Age and Carolingian helmets, but probably also of the medieval *salet*.[57]

The second helmet, conical and high (Fig. 5.7), and fitted with a crest, also resembles contemporary representations of Roman soldiers in Egypt, and particularly the helmets worn by some Roman soldiers engraved on a wooden

55 S. Various, *Splendori di Bisanzio,* Milano, 1990, pp. 257 ;

56 Giuliano, A., *Arco di Costantino*, Milano, 1955, pls. 37,49;

57 Nicolle, D., *Rome's enemies 5, The desert frontier*, London, 1991 p. 46 and pl. G1;

FIGURE 5.10
The Guard of the Governor, detail from the ivory Pyx with the Martyrdoom of Saint Menas, British Museum inv. Nr. M& LA79, 12-20,1 , probably Alexandria, 6th cent. AD, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

sculpture representing a battle scene, preserved in the Boden Museum, Berlin (Fig. 5.11). Here, Legionaries of the *Legio V Macedonica* (or *III Diocletiana Thebeorum*) and of another legion still not idenfied[58] are pushing back an attack of armoured Cataphracts (Blemmes or Lybian raiders?)[59]. The soldiers are wearing conical helmet fitted with crests, very similar to the one represented in the Abu Hennis painting. The existence of similar helmets, represented also in other Late-Roman monuments,[60] has been recently confirmed in two important archaeological discoveries: one from Fernpass in Austria, and the other in

58 The sculture, in cypress wood, is dated at the fifth century AD; the identification of the *Legio V Macedonica* or of *Legio III Diocletiana* could be proposed in relation to the devices of their shields, represented on the *Notitia Dignitatum*: s. Seeck, O., *Notitia Dignitatum, Berlin,* 1976, s. ND Or. VII, 4, VIII, 5, XXVIII, 14 (Memfi), 18 (Andro), XXXI, 31,33,38 (Ombos, Praesentia, Thebas), considering the adfirmation of Vegetius that the soldiers of a legion were identified by the *deigmata* of their shields, s. Vegetius., Ep., II, 18; s. also MacDowall, 1994, p. 48; the shield of the other *Legio* involved in the battle is very similar to that of the *Constantini Daphnenses*, s. ND Or. VIII,13 (46), but this unit is mentioned in the *Notitia* as stationed in Thracia under the command of the *Magister Militum per Thracias*. Interestingly, however, the ivory pyx of Hermitage shows soldiers with the same device on the shield, s. Banck, 1966, fig. 44;

59 Burckhardt, J., *Die Zeit Constantins des Grossen*, Leipzig, 1930, pl. 183;

60 Similar to the soldiers represented in the fragment of the Tetrarchic monument (arch of

FIGURE 5.11 *Scene of battle amongst Romans and Blemmes (?), from Egypt, carved wooden sculpture, 5th cent. AD, Berlin, Boden Museum.*

Germany.[61] The helmets are of a so-called Romano-Sassanian Typology, to which also the *Intercisa* Helmets belong, but their bowl – also divided by a

Diocletian) preserved in the Chiaromonti collection at the Vatican Museums, s. Dixon, P. & K., *The Late Roman Army*, London, 1996, p. 99.

61 The helmet of Fernpass has been recently published by Miks in Miks C., *Ein spätrömischer Depotfund aus Koblenz am Rhein. Studien zu Kammhelmen der späten Kaiserzeit. Kataloge Vor- und Frühgeschichtlicher Altertümer 44*, Mainz, 2014. S. also <http://oesterreich.orf.at/tirol/stories/85798/>.

FIGURE 5.12
a-c Late Roman helmet from the Balkans, 5th- 6th century AD, PHOTO COURTESY OF RZGM, PHOTOGRAPHER R. MÜLLER.

ridged crest – is higher and more conical (Fig. 5.12) than the typical helmets from Intercisa, Ausburg and Worms. They also have a nose- protection, which it is not completely visible on our fresco, but that could be deduced from the line painted over the eye-brows of the face now destroyed (Fig. 5.13).

FIGURE 5.13 *Comparison between the nose protection piece of the recently found Roman Helmet in Hamburg and one of the Helmets of the Abu Hennis Paintings, Abu Hennis,* PHOTO R. D'AMATO; NOSE-GUARD PHOTO COURTESY OF RZGM, PHOTOGRAPHER R. MÜLLER.

Also upon these helmets a plumed crest could be inserted, as shown by the Missorium of Valentinian I or II, preserved in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Geneva.[62]

The analysis of the helmets represented in the painting has revealed therefore that: 1) they correspond to real specimens worn by the Roman army between the fourth and the sixth centuries AD; 2) they were worn by the soldiers seen by the painter. The third important factor is that the Abu Hennis paintings give us a very important indication of the colour of the crests of the helmets of the Roman soldiers in Egypt, in sixth to seventh century AD: at least some regiments wore red crests, like the Imperial Guardmen of Constantinople.

The Armour

Defensive armour is worn only by the second legionary who stands at the left side of the King. It is a muscled breastplate, of which the painter just deline-

62 Dixon, 1996, pl. 14.

ated the muscles of the breast. This *thorax heroikon*[63] (breastplate in heroic fashion) was the most famous armour of the Greco-Roman world, and still in use in Late-Roman Empire[64] in both metal and leather. It was not merely for ceremonial use, as by the Emperor in triumphal celebrations,[65] but was worn by officers of the cavalry or guardsmen on the battlefield.[66] This is not really strange because Sassanian cavalry were clad in such Greek corselets, and so were Rajput warriors in the eighteenth century AD![67]

Also in the Coptic Art this kind of armour is very common: a Saint-Theodore icon in the Coptic Museum of Cairo represents him as a Late-Roman cavalryman clad in a grey (metallic?) plated armour (Fig. 5.14).[68] Moreover a recent study by M.Rassarth Debergh has shown that this kind of armour was a favourite one in the representations of military Gods and Saints between the sixth and the eighth centuries AD.[69] In the Abu Hennis frescoes two details of this armour are particularly interesting, and suggest that the artist used a real

63 Procopius. *Buildings,* I, 2,10.

64 Not only. It was probably continously used in Byzantium until the end of the Eastern Empire, and even by the peoples under the influence of Rome and Byzantium: s. Robinson R., *Oriental Armour*, London, 1967, pp. 54-55 (Turkish Nomads of the Eurasian steppes, tenth to eleventh centuries AD), Gamber, O., 'The Sutton Hoo military equipment-an attempted reconstruction', in *The Journal of the Arms & Armour society,* 6, June 1966 (Anglosaxons,seventh century AD); Shcherbakov, A., *Kulikov Battle, 1380 AD,* Moscow, 2001, pp. 14-15 (Russians 1380 AD); pp. 30-31 (Eastern Europeans 1380 AD); pp. 38-39 (Armenians 1380 AD); Shcherbakov, A., *Ledovoe battle, 1242 AD,* Moscow, 2001, pp. 6-7 (Russians 1242 AD); also in Italy, during the Middle Age, the tradition of the leather armour (*cuir bouilli*) in Roman style was very diffused amongst the Comunal militiamen, s. Various, *Il Sabato di San Barnaba, la battaglia di Campaldino,* Milano, 1989, pp. 41,48;

65 It was the costume known like *Achilles*: s. Dewing in Procopius, *Buildings,* pp. 395 ff. S. also Ravegnani, 1988, pl. II;

66 Ravegnani, 1988, p. 46 n. 40; Procopius, *History of the wars*, VII, 22-23: description of the armour of the young officer Bochas;

67 Robinson, 1967, pl. XVII;

68 The armour worn by Saint Theodore corresponds in shape to a bronze armour recently sold in the auction of the Axel Guttmann collection, by Christie, in April 2004, of unknown provenance, s.Christie's, 2004, p. 159; although dated at the first century AD, the representation of the muscles on this original breastplate is very stylised, not like the old Greco-Roman models of the classical age, compare for example with the specimens in Christie's, 2004, pp. 71,98. It fits more with the models represented on the Late-Roman art;

69 Rassarth-Debergh, M., 'Quelques Saintes Militaires dans la peinture copte et leur antécédents', in Vallet F. – Kazansky M., *L'armée Romaine et les Barbares, du IIIe au VIIe siècle*, Paris-Rouen, 1993; s. especially the recently discovered mural fresco from Kellia, Qouçour el-Izeila, representing three military Saints in their complete war attire, pp.383-384.

FIGURE 5.14
Icon representing a Military Saint, probably Saint Theodore, encaustic on wood, 5th or 6th century AD, *Cairo, Coptic Museum,* COURTESY OF DR. ASHRAF NAGEH.

model for his soldier. The presence of separated shoulder-guards, of hemispherical shape and of grey colour, means with all probability that the artist intended to represent a metallic armour; and the double range of lappets or pendants, of yellowish colour, hanging from them, is an indicatiion of the presence of a padded garment under the armour (Fig. 5.7).

From the third century AD onwards,[70] Late Roman muscled armours invariably had separated circular shoulder guards called μηλα in the Strategikon[71] . This is clearly visible on hundreds of statues and statuettes, frescoes, mosaics,

70 But some examples with separable shoulder-guards can be dated already at the end of the second century AD: s. the stela of Aelius Septimius in Budapest Museum, dated at the time of the Marcomannic Wars, in Kolník, T., *Rímske a Germánske Umenie na Slowensku*, Bratislava, 1984, fig. 30;

71 Pseudo-Maurikios., *Strategikon*. XII B 4,4;

paintings and other figurative sources.[72] Also the *Digest* of Justinian prohibits soldiers from selling separate shoulder-guards (humerale) from their armour.[73] These parts allowed a better mobility to the arms of the wearer: they were attached to the main body armour by hinges or leather strings.[74] The movement of the arm of the man, in Abu Hennis fresco, with the raised arm upon which the head leans, shows as the rounded shoulder guard is perfectly movable, mirroring a usual movement of the actual soldiers when resting.[75]

In the fresco, under the shoulder-guards are visible parts of the undergarment worn by the soldier. This kind of garment, that the sources of the fourth century AD call by the name of *Thoracomacus*,[76] was the *subarmale* of old tradition in the Roman Army.[77] Apart from its decorative effect, it served as a further element of protection, allowing the *miles* to better sustain the weight of the armour and to act with effectivness in difficult weather conditions. In the East it was probably composed, when not entirely in soft leather, of layers of linen and felt stitched together to form the needed thickness. Sometimes "*to avoid that the thoracomacus, soaked from rains and grown in weight, should become burdensome for the wearer, it will be convenient to cover it with a layer of well tanned Lybian Hyde, shaped in the same form of the same thoracomacus*". This further reinforcement of the *subarmale* involved a considerable compact-

72 S. for instance the statuette of Jupiter Dolichenus dressed as a Roman Emperor in full armour (Decius?) from Povazje (?) in Kolník, 1984, fig. 1; the sculptures of the Constantine Arch in Rome (early fourth century AD), in Giuliano, 1955, pls. 37,59.; the Barberini Dyptich (first half of the sixth century AD), in Grabar, A., *L'età d'oro di Giustiniano,* Milano, 1966, figs. 319,322; the fresco of the Vibia Hypogeum, in Pavia, C., *Guida dei Mitrei di Roma Antica,* Roma, 1999, p. 222; the mosaic of the seasons in Argos museum, dated in fifth to sixth century AD, who shows a very similar armour to the Abu Hennis representation in Iakovidis, S.E., *Micene-Epidauro-Argo-Tirinto-Nauplia,* Athens, 1980, p. 88 and for a reconstruction of it s. D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pl. B3 and p. 45; the miniatures of the *Ilias Ambrosiana*, dated in the sixth century AD, especially miniatures XIV, XVIII, XXIV, XXXIV, in Various, *Omero, Iliadis fragmenta cum picturis,* Milano, 1997 (special portfolio edited like calendar for the year 1997);

73 S. *supra* n. 13.

74 s. Kolias, 1988, pp. 41-42, n. 40.

75 Similar positions are very often visible in the soldiers around Kings or Governors, s. for instance Banck, 1966, pl. 44, representing the History of Joseph.

76 Anonymus, *De Rebus Bellicis,* XV.

77 D'Amato, R., *Arms and Armour of the Imperial Roman soldier, from Marius to Commodus, 112BC-192AD*, London, 2009, pp. 144 ss.

ness of the whole garment, shaped like a second maroquine leather armour filled with felt and linen.

The *subarmale* or *thoracomacus* was recorded as the *Peristithidion* in Justinian's age. It is mentioned by the *Anonymus of the Re Militari* as a quite plain garment, about one finger (= 1,95 cm.), thick, worn by the Imperial infantry.[78]

The anonymous writer describes this undercuirass garment worn by the infantrymen among the other items of the Roman equipment, and refers to felt and leather armour worn by soldiers instead of metal, or used as fabric and leather breast-plates underneath the metal armour. The soldiers wore these special garments to prevent the body from direct contact with the iron or other coarse materials and more comfortable to wear. The author says that an important factor for the effectiveness of the equipment should be its distance from the body: *"It should not be worn directly over ordinary clothing, as some do to keep down the weight of the armour, but over a himation* (garment) *at least a finger thick. There are two reasons for this. Where it touches the body the hard metal does not chafe but may fit and lie comfortably upon the body. In addition, it helps to prevent the enemy missiles from hitting the flesh because of the iron, the design, and the smoothness, but also because the metal is kept away from the body."*

Under-garments of this kind (*imatia* or *peristithidia*) added extra weight to the soldiers, but protected them from wounds caused by their armour and offered a more consistent protection. These undergarments were usually worn under the metal (mail, plated and laminated) and leather armour, but also under the leather fabric of a cuirass furnished with scales or *lamellae*, so that their defensive function had more importance.[79] Sometimes the *thoracomacus* was even worn on its own.[80]

These *thoracomaci* or *περιστηθιδια* are often represented in the pictorial sources with the usual lambrequins and fringes at the shoulders and abdomen

78 *Anonymus De re mil.*, 16, 20-27;

79 Examples in Macdowall, 1994, p. 41 (muscled leather armour, Egypt, fifth century AD); p. 56 (metal scales, sixth century AD, Egypt); p. 55 (leather corselet embossed, seventh century AD, Italy); p. 51 (metal plated armour, Greece, fifth to sixth centuries AD); in Boss, R., *Justinian's Wars: Belisarius, Narses and the reconquest of the West,* Stockport, 1993, p. 51 n. 40 (mail armour, Egypt, sixth century AD); in Metzger, C., 'Des trésors d'orfèvrerie caches dans les ruines', in *Le monde de la Bible*, 112, Juillet-Aout 1998, pp. 54-57, figs. 3,4 (chain mail, Nicosia or Constantinople, seventh century AD);

80 Gravestone of Severius Acceptus in Istanbul, third century AD, in Macdowall, 1994, p. 10;

called *pteryges*.[81] These protective hanging stripes are visible under the armour, from the waist down, and on the shoulders, often disposed in more ranges, divided in one or two rows of lappets as in Abu Hennis example. It is interesting to note that here, like in many other samples, one row of the *pteryges* was probably attached directly to the lower edges of the shoulder part of the armour (and probably at the lower edge of the not visible waist), so that when the armour was worn, the combination of the upper and lower stripes protected the wearer's limbs and upper arms. When in fact the armour superposed the *peristithidion*, the lower hanging stripes of the latter filled the gaps let by the *pteryges/kremasmata* of the armour, forming a very compact protection for the body. The material of such fringes could be silk and coarse cotton upon stitched felt,[82] like the material used for the *kremasmata*, the felt under armour garments (*zoupai*), mentioned in the Greek Medieval sources of the tenth and eleventh century.[83] Decorated fragments of similar garments were found in the Ballana graves, entirely in red leather, with fragments of *pteryges* (Fig. 5.19). These garments were probably manufactured in Roman Egypt, and imported in Nubia.

These undergarments were often painted in various colours. The panels of the Maximianus'Cathedra show the undergarments under the mail armours of the Romano-Egyptian soldiers, but but their colours have now faded: The colour of these garments is, however, very well recorded in the Bawit paintings (Fig. 5.20), in the military icons (Fig. 5.14) and on the frescoes of the recently discovered Church of the Holy Virgin of the Monastery of the Syrians, in Wadi Al Natrun, that could be dated at the second half of the seventh century AD.[84]

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81 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 23-24;

82 Nikephoros Phokas, *Praecepta Militaria*, in E. McGeer, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth, Byzantine warfare in the 10th century*, *DOP*, XXXIII, Washington, 1995, pp 69-70.

83 This was the undercorselet for excellence in middle Byzantine period, made of linen and cotton, as mentioned by Achmet, *Oneirokriticon*, ed. Fr.Drexl, Leipzig, 1925, 225, p. 177. S. also Du Cange-Du Fresne, *Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae graecitatis, duos in tomos digestum*, Lugdunum, 1688, col. 466. The word gives origin to the word *giubba* or *giubbone* in italian language, as distinctive military dress, a padded protection worn by soldiers in modern times. A good specimen of lamellar corselet worn over a *zoupa* is visible in the warriors of the Hermitage Tryptikon, s. Bank, 1966, fig. 126. About *Zoupa* cfr. also Dawson, Dawson T., 'Suntagma Oplon, The equipment of regular Byzantine troops, c. 950 to c. 1204' in Nicolle, D., *A Companion to Medieval Arms and Armour*, London, 2002. n. 10 p. 82;

84 Innemée, K.C., 'Recent Discoveries of Wall-Paintings in Deir Al-Surian', in *HJSS*, 1998, vol. 1 n. 2; Innemée, K.C., 'Deir al-Surian (Egypt): Its Wall-paintings, Wall-texts, and

Here, on the eastern wall of the southern *khurus*, two military saints on horseback have been found, represented with the heads of their horses facing each other. Interesting for our analysis is the Saint of the right, whose body is covered with a light armour in the shape of a *thorax heroikon* painted in brown, probably meaning leather. Underneath he wears a garment extending down to the lower legs, made of stripes of padded material. The lower rim of the armour is fitted with a border (*cymation*) in white lambrequins and the armour seems be worn in three different levels of quilted garments, the first (the upper one) of green colour, the second of brown colour divided vertically by red lines, the third (the lower one) of white colour, divided vertically by black lines (Figs. 5.21-5.22).

From the examples of Wadi al Natrun and Abu-Hennis we can understand the effort made by the artist to represent the very thick material that composed these padded protections forming part of the under-armour garment. The lappets or *pteryges* represented on the painting of Abu Hennis are divided in two ranges, and their yellowish colour is similar to the material mentioned for these garments in the later sources of Byzantium, kept in the military manuals of the tenth century. They mention quilted and padded protections, worn alone or in combination with metallic armours: *νευρικον, καββαδιον, βαμβακιον*.[85] Material employed was again linen, leather and felt, but also coarse silk and cotton, which seems to be represented in the upper leg protection of the cavalryman of Wadi al Natrun. The painter of Abu Hennis was able to represent even the series of small black lines dividing the compact garment at the shoulders, meaning the stitching lines. Such details could be copied only from the reality and were not merely the fruits of the artist's imagination. Therefore the

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Manuscripts', in *HJSS*, 1999, vol. 2 n. 2; ; the author has dated the paintings in a time before the 818/819 AD, but the style of armour and weapons worn by all the represented warriors are a strong support to date it at the time of the last period of Imperial rule in Egypt, i.e. the mid-seventh century AD; especially indicative is the Sassanian style of sword worn by one of the two Guardsmen on the columns flanking the iconostasis;

85 *Praecepta Militaria* III, 4, 26-31: "*...Each warrior must wear a κλιβάνιον. The κλιβάνιον should have μανικια down to the elbows. Down from the elbows they should wear μανικελια* (*armguards*) *which – both these and the skirts hanging* (*κρεμάσματα*) *from the κλιβάνια – have ζαβαι and are made of coarse silk* (*κουκολιον*) *or cotton* (*βαμβάκιον*) *as thick as can be stitched together...*" Nikephoros Ouranos 60, 4, 39-40: "...Each one must have a klivanion. The *κλιβάνια* must have *manikia* down to the elbows and the men must have *χειρόψελλα* (armguards). The skirts hanging (*κρεμάσματα*) from the *κλιβάνια* must have *ζαβαι* of coarse silk (*κουκολιον*) or cotton (*βαμβάκιον*) and these hanging pieces must be as thick as can be stitched together..."

Abu Hennis fresco confirms of the use of metal plate armour in the old Greco-Roman fashion in sixth to seventh century AD Egypt, worn with undercuirass garments mentioned in other sources. And Abu Hennis provides new evidence of the colour of these undergarments at least for Egypt.

The Shield

The guards of Herodes are protecting the King by means of two wide oval shields, which are outlined by a red border, followed by a grey edge and an off-white painted surface. They fit very well the descriptions of Late-Roman shields, and the archaeological data from the third to sixth century AD. From the end of the second century the slightly elliptical and the old oval shapes were typical of the Roman infantry and used even by the Emperor.[86] On the Notitia Dignitatum round shields with their polychrome deigmata identify military units. The infantry of Justinian's time is described as armed with wide shields (*skoutaria*, *aspides, clipei*), and their shape has always been indicated as slightly elliptical or oval-round.[87] Pictorial sources,[88] especially representations of the bodyguards of the Emperor or of the Provincial Governors show much the same.[89]

With this kind of shield the armoured infantry of the Eastern Empire still formed the ancient battle formation called *testudo*, opposing like a solid wall of wood and iron[90] to the Germanic and Persian opponents. A very recent discov-

86 Various, *I Longobardi, dalla caduta dell'Impero all'alba dell'Italia*, Milano, 2007, cat. 1.1.1.1;

87 Corippus, *Iohannidos*, VIII, 191; s. also Ravegnani, 1988, pp. 46-47; the *Anonymus De re mil.*, 16, p. 52 prescribes for the first line infantrymen (*Antesignani* or *Protostates*) the employment of a shield of round shape of the diameter of 164 cm.: "*… Their shields should be not less than one and a half meters in diameter, so that when they are joined together they form a solid, defensive protection behind which the army can hide without anyone being injuried by enemy missiles …*"; it is probably the same shield remembered by Procopius in the Gothic Wars (V, 29, 43) who describes the heroic Isaurian Tarmutus lifted on a round shield (*ασπις*) and carried away from the battlefield;

88 S. for instance Nicolle, D., 1994, pp. 10-11; 18-19; 53; 57;

89 S. for instance the shields of the *Primoscutarii* on Justinian mosaic in San Vitale, Ravenna, round-ellyptcial in shape, of very big size, in Grabar, 1966, fig. 171; for contemporary representations of Imperial Generals or Governors protected by their bodyguards holding shields in a very similar way to Abu Hennis paintings s. Nicolle, 1994, pp. 49 (*Vienna Genesis*, Nat. Bibl., Ms. Theol. Gr. 13, *folio 36*), 64 (Bib. Nat., Ms. Syr. 341, Paris, *folio 8*);

90 Agathias, Historiae, IV, 18, 3;

ery of fragmentary specimens of shields in Egypt has clarified the structure and composition of the Roman round shield in the fifth and sixth centuries. The shields have been dated to the sixth century (shield 1), at the beginning of the fifth century (shield 2), and in the period between the 453 AD and the beginning of the sixth century (shield 3). The analysis of these 3 circular shields, found in the Fayum region and now preserved in Trier University, by Dr. Klaus Peter Goethert, revealed the following characteristics:[91]

1. The shields were made of cedar wood, covered by animal skin and goat or sheep skin.Each of the wooden planks forming the structure of the shield was 4-6 cm. wide and about 7 cm. thick; the stitching among them measured about 6 cm: the planks were glued in a flat way, then slightly wedged shaped- in an irregular way;
2. Leather was attached to the wood by means of of an animal glue, of which still the shield 1 showed traces[92] . Then – a constant characteristic of the most part of the Late-Roman shields – it was sewn all around the edge; the holes of the sewing were about 4-8 mm. from the outside edge and were disposed at intervals of 2-2,2 cm. or about 3 cm.
3. all the shields were lavishly decorated on their leather surface, with scenes of hunting or battle with vegetal and geometrical motifs;
4. The diameters of the shields were: 103 cm. (shield 1); 108 cm. (shield 2); 98 cm. (shield 3); the shields convexity varied from 5.5 cm. to 6 cm.

These characteristics are all clearly visible on Abu Hennis painting. The grey-metallic wider edge is probably the rim of bronze or iron. Shields certainly had a central boss (umbo, βουκολον) and sources[93] mention Persian horses being annoyed by the clashing of the Roman shields (ασπιδα) at the battle of Sura-Callinicus.

The surface of the shields in Abu Hennis seems to be painted in off-white, without a specific pattern, but the shields are only partially visible. The shields of the *Doukes* and High officer were often personalized in their *deigmata*, as the recently found Egyptian shields showed. Some iconographical source show

91 Junkelmann, M., *Reiter wie Statuen aus Erz,* Mainz,1996, pp. 115 ff.;

92 Junkelmann, 1996, fig. 193;

93 Procopius, *History of the Wars*, I, 18, 43;

not *deigmata* on the shield surface, but only a single colour, as in the Abu-Hennis specimens.[94]

The Abu Hennis artist probably copied his shields from those of regular military units. The *deigmata* of the units represented on the *Notitia Dignitatum* is the richest source for the shield device of fourth to fifth century AD.[95] They represent the devices of the infantry and cavalry regiments of the Western Empire, those of the Imperial Guard for both parts of Empire and the devices of the infantry Regiments in the East. They are fundamental also for our understanding of earlier shield devices and their evolution in Byzantine times.

The illustrations preserved in the Bodleian manuscript of the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Cod. Ox. Can. Class. Lat. Misc. 378) show the iconography of some of the shields of the units under the command of *Dux Thebaidos*. One shield, with the *deigma* of the *Legio Secunda Flavia Constantia Thebeorum* on, shows strong analogies with the shields of Abu Hennis paintings. The shield in Oxford Codex presents the same red edge, and the off-white surface of the shield *insignia* (Fig. 5.15). Following the *Notitia* in 430 AD a part of the *Legio* was stationed in Cusas,[96] in the *Provincia* of *Thebaida I,* to patrol the borders against possible invasions of the Nomad tribes and ensure the regular pedestrian roads between the Red Sea and the High Nile. It is possible that this unit remained there at least until 545 AD, by which time it was probably transformed into a regiment of the *limitanei* and, therefore, was disbanded by Justinian I. But perhaps the unit survived in *Thebaida*, possibly under a local commander, until the Arab conquest. In this way their shields could have been the reference models for the anonymous painter of Abu Hennis.

The Swords

The ferocious killers from the Abu Hennis painting are brandishing short swords to perform their merciless duty. The kind of weapon in their hands is a

94 Mauve in Meroth mosaic, with umbo and rim in grey, probably meaning iron, s. Ilan Z.-Damati I. 'Notes and News. Kh. Marus, 1983 and 1984' in *Israel Exploration Journal* 34 (1984), 265-68, pl. 34 C; s.also the shields of the various Guardsmen in *Vienna Genesis*, folios 16 (light purple and green), dark pink (*folio* 35), scarlet red (*folio* 36) in Gerstinger, H., *Die Wiener Genesis,* Farbenlichtdruckfaksimile der bibliche Bilderbibel aus dem 6 Jahrhundert n. Chr., Cod. Vindob. Theol. Gr. 31, 2 volums, Vienna, 1931;

95 For the function, origin and importance of the *Notitia* s. as main reference the monumental work of Seeck, O., *Notitia Dignitatum*, Berolini, 1872 (1966); but also the excellent work of Goodburn R.-Bartholomew, P., *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum*, Papers presented in the Conference of Oxford in December 13 to 15, 1974, Oxford, 1976;

96 Seeck, 1966, p. 64, Cussa- *Χουσαι* -Chusis- *Κασος*;

FIGURE 5.15
Comparison among the shield of the soldier on the left and the insignia of the Flavia Constantia Secunda Thebeorum, from the Cod. Ox. Can. Class. Lat. Misc. 378, Oxford Bodleian Library.

very well-known single-edged short sword of late-Antiquity, the *scramasax* or *sax* of the Germans,[97] called *semi-spatha* in the Roman sources.[98] This kind of weapon used to be regarded by archaeologists as typical of the Germanic peoples, because so many long single-edged knives were found in the tombs of the

97 Lebedynsky, J., *Armes et guerriers barbares au temps des grandes invasions*, Paris, 2001, pp. 14 ff.

98 S. n. 15 above;

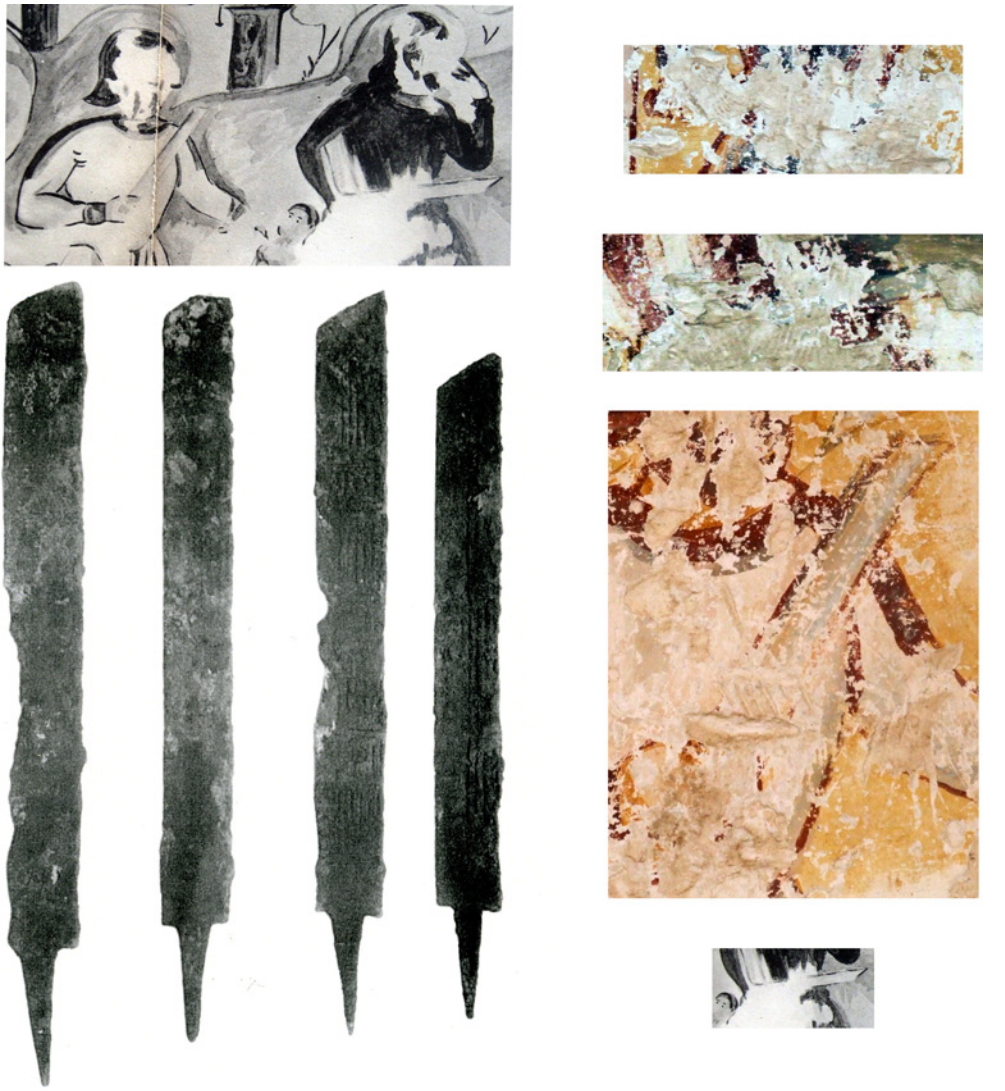

FIGURE 5.16 *Comparison of the Swords from Ballana graves with the swords of the Abu Hennis executioners, ex Emery,* COURTESY OF THE *IFAO* LIBRARY.

Alamans, Franks, Saxons, Burgunds and Lombards..[99] But while the Romans may have borrowed this type from people beyond the frontiers Michael

99 For the Alamans s. for instance Werner, J., *Das Alamannische Graberfeld von Mondelheim,* Augsburg, 1955, fig. 4, pls. 26, 27, 29,30, 33, 37-39; for the Saxons s. Underwood, R., *Anglo-Saxon weapons and warfare*, Stroud, 1999, pp. 68-71; for the Franks s. Various, *Die Franken, Wegbereiter Europas, 5. bis 8. Jahrhundert*. Mainz: 1996, pp. 702, 882, 1017,1022; for the Lom-

Kazanski supported the thesis of B. Arrhenius that many were produced in Imperial factories as early as the fourth to fifth centuries AD. Notable amongst them were the so-called weapons 'à décor cloisonné', like the scramasax of the Frankish King Childerich. This suggests that the prototypes of the western scramasaxes came from Constantinople.[100]

The use of these short swords by the troops stationated in Egypt in the fifth to seventh centuries is confirmed by findings from the old excavations of Achmim-Panopolis.[101] But the swords of the Abu-Hennis painting look very similar to the short swords found in the Ballana graves, and dated to the fifth to sixth centuries AD.[102] If we compare the original blades with the still preserved details of the fresco the similarity is astonishing (Fig. 5.16). These swords have a single-edge blunt blade, whose top is cut off as in the Abu-Hennis painting. So they were used only as cutting weapons. They measure 40 to 48 cm. in lenght.[103] Recently Prof. Mario Ricci expressed to me the idea of a Constantinopolitan origin for the blades and scabbards of Ballana, as the Roman manufacture of the horse trappings is evident.[104]

It is not the case that swords like those represented on the painting were found in Late-Antique Nubian Royal graves. These kinds of swords, produced by the factories of the Roman Empire, were distributed amongst the troops and employed in Egypt by the soldiers of the Roman army. At the same time they were a symbol of pride for the Kings of the nearest southern state border of the Empire, where they were made to be included in their graves.

If my theory is correct, we have the proof that the painter of Abu-Hennis had in front of his eyes real specimens of weapons which he recorded on the frescoes, giving us a vivid and real representation of the soldiers of his epoch.

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bards s. Mengarelli, R. 'La necropoli barbarica di Castel Trosino presso Ascoli Piceno', in *Mon. Ant. Linc.* XX, Roma, 1902, 47-235, p. 291;

100 S. for example the specimen with fittings in gold decorated according to a typical Mediterranean tradition, from the Necropolis of Castel Trosino, in Mengarelli, 1902, pl. V, and Augenti A-Bertelli C., *Felix Ravenna, La croce, la spada e la vela: l'alto Adriatico fra V e VI secolo*, Milano, 2007, pp. 135-139;

101 Forrer, R., *Die frühchristlichen Alterthümer aus dem Graberfelde von Achmim-Panopolis,* Strassburg, 1893, pl. X, 22;

102 Emery, W.B., *The Royal tombs of Ballana and Qustul*, Cairo, 1938, pl. 49;

103 Emery, 1938, p. 219;

104 Emery, 1938, pp. 262-271, fig. 94;

The Clothing

Tunics

The tunics represented on the soldiers of Abu Hennis are long-sleeved tunics, off-white, red-purple, green-blue and red scarlet in colour, all decorated with embroidery on the cuffs or around the neck. These colours were usual in the Late Roman Army.[105]

The tunics of three executioners (but we have to suppose also those, scarcely visible, of the Herodes's Guards) are very similar to the tunics worn by the Barbarian and Roman soldiers represented in contemporary artworks. They look identical, for instance, in shape and decorations, to the tunics of the soldiers represented in the Bawit frescoes (Fig. 5.17), of the military men represented in the mosaics of the mount Nebo monasteries and Churches,[106] and to those of the soldiers represented on the ivory caskets[107] and many other figurative works of sixth and seventh centuries AD.[108]

The *Strategikon* of the Emperor Maurikios (582-602 AD) says that infantry should have either[109] either Gothic tunics (*zostaria*) or short ones split up the sides coming down to their knees (*armelausia*). Both of them are visible on Abu Hennis painting.

Maurice said that the infantrymen "*... should wear either Gothic tunics coming down to their knees or short ones split up the sides....*" On this occasion Maurice does not speak of a tunic which should be worn over the armour, but of the normal kind of tunics worn by the soldiers also under the armour. Isidore of Seville writing in the seventh century AD (*c.* AD 650),[110] describes the kind of tunic called *armilausion*, mentioned by the *Strategikon* XII, B2. The description given by the contemporary Isidore of Siville of this tunic is the following: "*... armelausia are so called by the people, because they are cut and open front and back, but closed only on the arms, i.a. armiclausa, missing the litter C....*"

The word could well come from the tunic worn in the Roman army by the Germanic infantrymen, or by the Visigoths, the tunics which were seen by Isidore with his own eyes so that there is no doubt about his description. Reiske, in his commentary, describes the *armilavsion* as a kind of military coat

105 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 33 ff. for a detailed catalogue of the colours shown in the artistical works and preserved on the real specimens;

106 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, p. 34; Piccirillo, M., *The Mosaic of Jordan,* Amman, 1963, figs. 12, 142-143, 168, 201, 452, 479;

107 Nicolle, 1994, p. 53;

108 Nicolle, 1994, p. 24 (miniatures from the Ashburnham Pentateuch);

109 Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strategikon*, XII, B2;

110 *Origines*, Book XIX, xxii;

FIGURE 5.17 *Hunting soldiers, from Bawit, Chapels XII and XVIII, ex Cledat, 1904,* COURTESY OF *IFAO* LIBRARY.

which goes down covering the lower abdomen and sleeveless, having wide holes or openings for the arms. The origin of the dress is ascribed to the German elements in Roman army too, but the etymology *armelausia* or *armelos* should mean a garment without arms or without forearms.

This is exactly the kind of garment worn by the presumptive killer of Zacharias (Fig. 5.5). Over a second tunic of blue indigo colour, the man is wearing a wide embroidered tunic, echoing the old *dalmatica*.

There were two types of *armilausia*: the so called *epomis* or *scapulare*, which covered the shoulders down to the elbows and which was sometimes worn over armour and called *epilorikon* ("over the coat of mail"):a sleeveless form, worn over the inner tunic.[111] Both garments could be worn alone, like in Abu Hennis example, or under the cuirass.[112]

111 Such was for example the *Aurigarion* used by the Circus Runners or *faktionarioi*; s. the Porphirios monument once on the *spina* of the Hippodrome of Constantinople and now preserved in the archaeological museum of Istanbul, in Mordtmann, J.H., 'Das Denkmal des Porphyrius', in *Mitth. D. Arch. Inst. Kostantinopel*, v, 1880, pp. 295-308, s. pls. XVI.

112 The first of these garments was practically subsequent to the *chlamys* and *sagion-sagum*, and, as those, was often of red colour (*Martyrium* of Saint Bonifatius, 14: *ρουσιον αρμελαυσιον φωρων* i.e. "*...wearing a red armelausion...*"; Paulinus, ep. 17: "*...for that the armelausion was of shining red...*" in Pio Franchi de Cavalieri, "Come andavano vestiti ed armati i milites dell'adparitio", in *Note Agiografiche VII*, Roma 1928, p. 225 n. 3). The *epomis* meant

The gothic tunics or *zostaria* (i.e. closed by a belt) were the tunics of Germanic origin (visible for the first time on the fragments of Arkadios and Theodosius column)[113] largely introduced into the Roman army after the fifth century AD. The Carrand diptych in Florence is fifth century and shows[114] a Roman soldier of Germanic origin wearing it together with wide trousers and hairy mantel with long hanging sleeves.

Since the sixth century they were often characterised by a T-brimmed embroidery often lozenges decorated, or by an encolure band whose segments extended on the upper shoulders, as in the Abu Hennis soldiers (Figs. 5.2-5.3-5.4). Together with trousers similarly decorated with lozenges, they were adopted by the Romans from the Goths. Examples are represented on the barbarians of Diptych Barberini at Louvre (representing the triumph of Anastasius or Justinian),[115] and on the Cathedra of Maximianus.[116] A middle band comes down vertically on the front, departing from the neck and arriving beyond the waist, the second band decorated the sleeve from the shoulder to the elbow. The name *zostaria* clearly means "closed by belts" and in fact the mosaics and the ivories of the sixth century show how the tunics of such types were often worn together with composite belts of a precious type, or in any case closed by a military belt, as in Abu Hennis and Bawit (Fig. 5.17). In the Roman army the belt was, since the beginning, a distinctive sign of military status.[117]

Frescoes and mosaics show, for these sixth to seventh century tunics, a lozenge decoration typically T-shaped. Often, this kind of trimming was infact decorated by lozenges: it is visible on the garments of the soldiers represented on the ivory Throne of Maximian in Ravenna (550 AD),[118] as well in the pyx of Saint Menas, with great probability based on *milites* of *Quinta Macedonica* in Egypt and *Dux Thebaides* Germanic *Buccellarii*.[119] This trimming was typical for the soldiers in Egypt, attested also by Coptic carved reliefs of the sixth cen-

substantially a mantle or cloak which covers the whole body, not necessary the *chlamis*, but also something else, so big in any case to conceal under it the naked sword (Procopius, History of the Wars, IV, 28). We can include in this word the military garments used to cover the whole body;

113 S. Giglioli, G.Q., *La colonna di Arcadio a Costantinopoli*, Napoli, 1952, figs. 47-49;

114 See Nicolle, D., *Romano-Byzantine Armies 4th -9th century*, London, 1992, p. 19; probably made in Constantinople following Delbrueck, R., *Die Consular Dyptichen*. Berlin, 1979, p. 274 cat. 69;

115 Delbrueck, 1979, cat. n. 48;

116 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, p. 6;

117 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 17-18; D'Amato, 2009, pp. 20-24 and 98-101;

118 Nicolle, 1994, p. 15;

119 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 6 and 13;

tury narrating the biblical episode of David and Goliath[120] and by Coptic frescoes on the wood.[121]

Specimens surviving from the seventh century AD confirm this style of decoration for military tunics.If the bulk of the artistic evidence comes from frescoes, mosaics, manuscript miniatures, statues, coins from all over the Empire, the archaeological evidence comes from Egypt (Antinoe, Arsinoe, Achmimoe).[122] The average size of such a tunic, judging from the sources and specimens, was about 1 m. and 12.5 cm. for 1m. and 65 cm. of width, but it could not be considered a rule.[123]

The examples from Antinoe have silk facings, brocaded twills with geometrical damask, on cuffs and borders and around the neck. Both the groom in the Washington example, and the executioner of St Menas on the British Ivory casket show decoration of this kind. The Abu Hennis tunics are like this and show colour which has been lost on other representations.

Hundreds of lozenges decorated tunics and mantles were found in Antinoe. Splendid military specimens of such Roman tunic manufactured in the seventh century, come from Egypt and especially from Antinoe, that is the city near Abu-Hennis.[124] Military dresses, imported from the East, and used both by Romans and their enemies, were found in the graves of the Roman Period, from the first to the eighth century AD.[125] At Antinoe and in the "horsemen's graves" hundreds of pieces of clothing, some complete, have been found since 1896.[126] Many of them can be assigned to high officers of army, as indicated by the presence of objects like a sword and a whip. The men were of Christian faith, as attested by the presence in the tombs of small crosses and inscriptions

120 Nicolle, 1994, pp. 10-11;

121 Rutschowscaya, M.H., *La peinture Copte*, Paris, 1992, cat. 41 p. 63 and col. Fig. 41;

122 S. D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, p. 10; Schoefer, M. 'Prèsentation d'une ensemble trouvé à Antinoe', in Fluck,C. & Vogelsang-Eastwood G., *Riding Costume in Egypt*, Leiden-Boston, 2004, pp. 109-115 and col. Fig. 17; and Fluck, C., 'Zwei Reitermantel aus Antinoopolis im Museum fur Byzantinische Kunst, Berlin, fundcontext und Beschreibung, in Fluck-Vogelsang, 2004, pp. 137-152 and col. Fig. 27;

123 S. infact different specimens in Wulff O. – Volbach W.F., *Spatantike und Koptische Stoffe aus Agyptischen Grabfunden*, Berlin, 1926, pp. 136-137, cat. 14243-14232-14244-14231, pls. 121/2, 123-124, 125-126;

124 S. now the very complete work of catalogation done by Calament F., *La revelation d'Antinoé par Albert Gayet, Histoire, archéologie, muséographie,* IFAO, 2 vols., Le Caire, 2005; especially the corpus, s. pp. 335-449;

125 A very wide catalogne comprehensive also of fragments of military tunics, garments and clothing in Various, *Antinoe, 100 anni dopo,* Firenze, 1998, pp. 184-229;

126 Calament, F., 'L'apport historique des découvertes d'Antinoé au costume dit de 'Cavalier Sassanide' in Fluck & Vogelsang, 2004, pp. 37-62 ;

with figures of Saints. The hellenized names of the owners (Pamio, for instance) attested their Romano-Egyptian origin.[127]

The bands around the neck of garments, about 10 cm. wide, with their lozenges motifs, could be compared to Chinese Han silk from the second century BC to the third century AD. It is obvious that this kind of decoration, realised in samitum (weft-faced compound twill) with drawloom technique or with warp-faced style for more elaborated patterns, as well in tabby-tapestry style, passed to the Romans through the Sassanians.[128]

Trousers

All the soldiers represented in the Abu Hennis paintings are wearing trousers (*bracae*). They were an integral part of the military uniform of the Roman army since the third century AD, derived from both the Easterners and the northern Europeans.[129] Even if their usage was still considered at the end of the fourth century AD too 'Barbarian' to justify the Imperial measures of 397 and 399,[130] their wide use inside the army had already 200 years of history.

They could be either tights, covering all the leg including the foot, or trousers as far as the instep, following the Celtic model. The Grue mosaic of Carthage,[131] of Honorian age, shows the army officers in Africa wearing a new model of trousers, wider than the earlier *bracae*, with very characterised pleats, very similar in shape to modern trousers, and probably a prototype of those represented in the Abu Hennis painting. Particularly it shows a parallelism between two sides, even if the lower edge is cut not straight but oblique, following a line which joins the instep with the heels. Similar trousers are seen on the African mosaic of Gafsa, worn by Orpheus, and on three soldiers of the Carrand Diptich, confirming it was a military garment.[132]

It is difficult to say if this fashion was adopted by the soldiers from the Easterners, as the Parthian and Sassanian models suggest, or if this particular

127 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, p. 11;

128 S. on the point and especially on the difficulty to separate the Sassanian clothes found in Egypt from the clothes of Sassanian inspiration made in the Roman Egypt Bénazeth, D., Les Tissus 'Sassanides' d'Antinoé au Musée du Louvre, in Fluck & Vogelsang, 2004, pp. 117-128;

129 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 18-19;

130 Cod. Theod. XIV, 10, 2-3 forbides their wearing "*...inside the city of Rome nobody use trousers and small boots* (*tzangia*)*...*" but probably this prohibition was not extended to the soldiers; s. *Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis*, edd. Th. Mommsen-P. Krueger, 1,2, Berolini 1962;

131 Ville, 1965-1966, pp. 139-148, s. pp. 143 f. and fig. 9;

132 Ville, 1965-1966, figs. 10-11 and Nicolle, 1992, p. 19;

straight shape of the "elephant's paws" and the oblique cut represent an original Roman fashion. These trousers passed from the Romans to the Vandals who later adopted "elephant's paws", and this form was transmitted to the Eastern army of the sixth century. Straight leg trousers, open in the lower part, decorated with a wide band on the rim, are worn by the Barbarian kings of the Barberini Dyptich, representing probably the triumph of Justinian and Belisarius over Africans, Vandals and Persians.[133] It is repeated in one of the soldiers of Abu Hennis (Fig. 5.2). In some ivory works of the sixth century, made in Alexandria and so probably representing *milites* of the *Officium* and soldiers of the *Numeri* stationed in *Thebaides*, the transformation is completed : the troops wear very large trousers, ending in a flounce of different cloth.[134] It is a general fashion of the Eastern troops in Egypt and in the Near East in the sixth and seventh century: sometimes they are strap furnished, and decorated with heavy stitched embroidery of lozenges type.[135] In the Abu Hennis frescoes one of the killers is wearing trousers with a decorated band, suggesting that the others were also, but we cannot confirm this because of the poor condition of the painting.

We know from Procopius[136] that, under Justinian 'Scythian' costumes, derived from steppe peoples like the Goths, exerted great influence on styles of dress. The warriors of the Maximian throne, with their beard, their particular hairstyle, their trousers, represent in all details this fashion, diffused among the troops from the Constantinople mode. Moreover, this work was created in Egypt, where the *Scytae Justiniani* were stationed. This element could help also to identify the ethnic composition of the Roman soldiers who are represented in the painting: only Herodes' guardsmen are shaved, and could be identified with the soldiers of Greek origin, but the image of the killers is that of Easterners or even Eastern Germanic warriors, very similar in clothing and physical aspect to some of those engraved in the ivory panels of Ravenna's throne (Fig. 5.18).

In the Eastern part the trousers and especially the tights were called *anaxirides*, of various colour as already attested since the second century in the *scolii* of Dio Chrisostomus : *"...the anaxirides, as are called the superior brakia of various colours, for who begun to call in this way the leg bands highly decorated and the brakion done by bands; or at end the anaxirides, called in the popular language toubia..."*.[137] In the sixth century AD they were also called by Hesychios

133 Delbrueck, 1979, cat. 48;

134 Nicolle, 1994, pp. 15, 53;

135 S. D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 5, 6, 10, 33-34, 37-39;

136 Procopius, *Anecdota – Historia Arcana*, VII, 3;

137 Du Cange-Du Fresne, 1688, col. 1588 s.v. *τουβιον*;

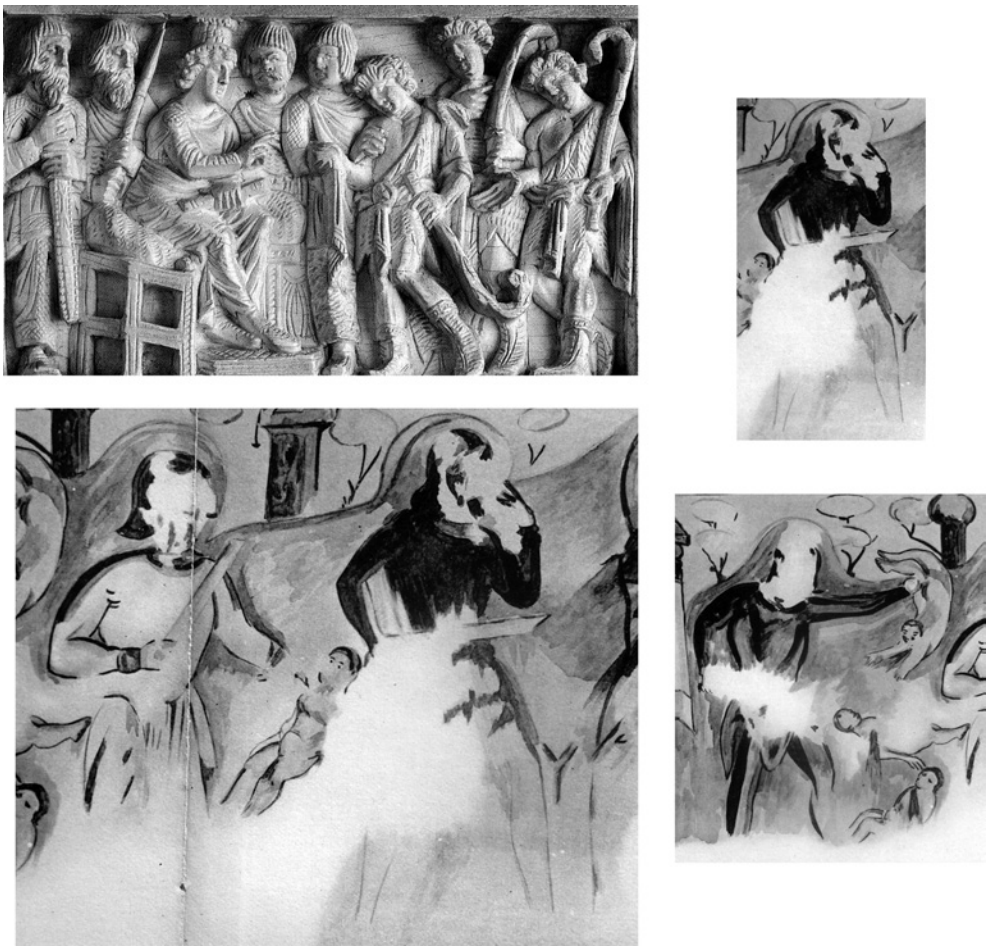

FIGURE 5.18 *Comparison of the physical aspect of the Barbarian Buccellarii of the Maximianus Cathedra in Ravenna and the Abu Hennis executioners, Ravenna, Museo Arcivescovile and Abu Hennis, in situ,* AUTHOR'S PHOTOS.

fiminalia, *vrakia*, and defined as "*barbaric dress of the feet*"[138] They could be made of wool (*epios*), cotton (*bambakos*) and silk (*metaxhes*), depending on the season. They were, from the fifth century onwards, much more fitted to the leg, and were laced up before the belly and closed at the sides.[139]

138 P. Franchi de Cavalieri, 1928, n. 1 p. 211;

139 Procopius, *Analecta*, 1,20 : "*...the straps...which are fastening the anaxyrides...*"; In Byzantine age they were worn by soldiers as civilian officers of different colours and variously ornamented cloth, of check, rhomboidal, flowered and circular pattern, often decorated by a

FIGURE 5.19 *Fragments of leather thoracomacus, from Ballana, Cairo, Egyptian Museum,* COURTESY OF MRS. MAY TRADE.

Trousers were called also *sarabara* or *saraballa*, in a Persian way, even if Procopius sometimes uses the word *anaxyrides* too.[140] They could be more or less loose (*laxi*), extending down to instep or entering in the footwear, sometimes with the foot attached. In this last circumstance it is difficult to understand from the figurative sources if the soldiers wear tights or trousers: normally, if we note vertical folding, there are trousers pleated so that they could be tucked into footwear, as in one of the Abu Hennis figures seems to suggest.

band running until the feet point. This kind of decoration was directly derived from Easterners, as Parthians, Palmyrans, Sassanians, s. Bielajev, 1926, especially pp. 206 ff.;

140 Bielajev, 1926, p. 207; Procopius, *History of the wars*, II, 21, 6;

FIGURE 5.20 *Hunting officer, from Bawit, Chapel XXXVII, ex Cledat, 1904,* COURTESY OF *IFAO* LIBRARY.

FIGURE 5.21 *Saint Horseman in the Church of the Holy Virgin of the Monastery of the Syrians, in Wadi Al Natrun, mid-7th cent. AD (?),* AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

FIGURE 5.22
The same, detail of the padded under-armour garment, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

Analysis of the Results

A comparison of the Abu Hennis painting with archaeological finds and other artworks suggests the following conclusions:

1. The weaponry and clothes of the Abu Hennis painting resemble strongly what we know from written and archaeological sources of the fourth to seventh centuries;
2. In a similar way there is a great correspondence between the images of Abu Hennis and other artworks and the rich repertory of the clothes found on the Egyptian territory, especially by Gayet and Pfister in Antinoe, and by Forrer in Achmim-Panopolis.
3. This high level of correspondence tells us that the artist used real warriors of their period to represent their subjects, not only in the images of the military Saints, but even in the scenes where soldiers were transformed

in the evil executioners, as in the massacre of the innocent, or the Pharaoh's army. This is not strange, considering the huge amount of massacres performed by the Roman soldiers in Egypt amongst the civil population for religious reasons.

4. This fact gives a lot of credibility to the images of the Coptic paintings in the late Roman Period, at least for what concerns the representation of the material military culture, in contrast to the views which consider these art, like the successive development in Byzantium, highly conventional.
5. Further, the images of Abu Hennis can be considered as useful for understanding of the actual aesthetical aspect of the Roman Soldier in the fourth to seventh century AD Egypt, before the Arab conquest.

Conclusion: The Importance of Abu Hennis Paintings in the Reconstruction of the Roman Military Equipment

One of the most interesting topics, in the field of the military archaeology of the Roman Empire, is the attempt to reconstruct, as far as possible, the image of the Roman soldier, in a scientific way. Although archaeological findings are a great help towards his goal, the main sources are the images of warriors represented on artworks, helped by the descriptions held in the literary sources. Late Roman Egypt contains one of the richest repertories of such images: hundreds of warriors are represented on carved works in stone,[141] wood[142] and ivory,[143] or painted on frescoes in Churches,[144] on the icons,[145] represented on textiles[146] or reproduced like small statuettes destined to be the elements of furniture in civil or ecclesiastical buildings,[147] or impressed on the objects made for an everyday use.[148] The warriors are often represented like military Saints, showing the first Christian Martyrs killed under the last persecutions of the Tetrarchic Age, like Saint George, Saint Menas, Saint Theodore, and later,

141 Atalla, N.S, *Coptic Art, II, Sculpture-Architecture*, Barcelona, 1989, pp. 62-63, 107;

142 Atalla, 1989, p. 71;

143 Buckton, D., *Byzantium, treasures of Byzantine Art and culture*, London, 1994, p. 74 cat. 65; D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 6,13;

144 D'Amato-Sumner, pp. 36-39;

145 Atalla, N.S., *Coptic Art, I, Wall paintings-Peinture Murale*, Barcelona, 1989 (1989b), p. 93;

146 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, p. 44;

147 D'Amato-Sumner, 2005, pp. 42-43;

148 Atalla, 1989, p. 119;

Saint Demetrios.[149] Often the soldiers are pictured in the scenes taken from the Old and New Testament, like the Exodus from Egypt of the Israelites, the deeds of David or, as in our case, the massacre of the Innocents. Sometimes the representation of military men shows them engaged in the hunting scenes.[150]

These images, independently from their didactic purpose have a common denominator: they are faithful representations of the soldiers of the Roman Empire, taken from the daily-life by the Romano-Egyptian artists of the fourth to seventh centuries AD. They were created by the artists who used the military servants, soldiers, officers, high-commanders of Late-Roman Egypt like the models for their artworks. It is often suggested that images in Roman art are highly conventional stereotypes. This may be true of the representation of mythological figures, and the main personages of the Christian Faith. But it is not true for the artistic representation of the objects from daily-life, and of common people, artisans, workers, women, children and soldiers, who were shown in the normal gear of the epoch in which the piece of artwork was realised.

A clear proof of it is that the military clothing and weaponry of the soldiers and warriors represented on Abu Hennis frescoes perfectly correspond, as I have shown, to the descriptions of the written sources for the related period, and with the few fragments of the military equipment found in Egypt or on the territories of the Roman Empire. Above all there is the correspondence between the images of the clothing represented in the frescoes and the rich repertory of clothes found on the Egyptian territory, especially by Gayet and Pfister in Antinoe, and by Forrer in Achmim-Panopolis.

The size and scope of the present work do not permit a thorough comparison of all the findings, but I think that, in this contribution, we have given a very clear example of the complete reliability of late Roman art in the Christian Egypt as a source for the reconstruction of the military equipment.

The scene of the massacre of the innocents, first attested in the Roman Art in the fourth century AD, can be followed in all its successive evolutions and representations as a true guide-line for a better understanding of the image of the Roman warrior, until the end of the Eastern Empire. In the West, this biblical episode was also popular and can be used also as a model for the reconstitution of the western medieval man-at-arms, represented in the successive steps of the evolution of the armament. Abu Hennis, one of the few preserved examples of the sixth and seventh centuries AD, is particularly important and rich in details so that it deserves to be considered a

149 Rassart-Debergh, 1993, figs. 2,3, pl. 1; 1-4 pl. 2; 1-2, pl. 3; 1-2 pl. 4; pl. 6;

150 Zibawi, 2003, figs. 18 p. 26; 58-59 pp. 60-61; 76-77 p. 74; 80-82 p. 76;

fundamental milestone in the military iconography of the Late-Roman soldier in Egypt just before the Arab conquest.

Abbreviations

BIFAO	*Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*
BSA	*British School of Archaeology*
CFHB	*Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*
DOP	*Dumbarton Oak Papers*
HJSS	*Hugoye Journal of Syriac Studies*
JRMES	*Journal of the Roman Military Equipment Study*
MIFAO	*Mémoires de l'Institut Français d'archéologie orientale*

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CHAPTER 6

Σῶκος: An Unusual Byzantine Weapon

Georgios Theotokis

The lasso can be found in historical sources and pictorial representations stretching from the Black Sea and the Urals to Transoxania and China, dating back to the first millennium B.C. Nevertheless, it is surprising that perhaps the most well-known reference to the lasso in battle comes from the description of a Hun warrior by the fourth century Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus who, in 392 AD, he wrote his report on their steppe tactics based on the accounts he had gathered from contemporary Goth fighters. There are, however, no studies that examine the place and value of the lasso in the Eastern Roman armies and the role of central Asian elements in its assimilation into the Roman panoply.

My aim in this chapter is to trace the origin of this weapon in the Eastern Mediterranean basin and to evaluate the historical evidence on the use of the lasso by Imperial soldiers or soldiers in the service of the Byzantine Emperor. I will use a variety of sources ranging from the *Strategika* – military manuals – of the sixth and tenth centuries, histories and chronicles from the Late Roman period up to the beginning of the thirteenth century, epic poems from the Byzantine, Iranian and Turkish folklore tradition, manuscript miniatures, and mosaic and fresco representations. My strategy will be twofold: firstly, I will examine the history of the use of the lasso in the eastern Mediterranean civilizations and, secondly, I will highlight the evidence of its use in primary sources up to the thirteenth century. Specific attention will be paid to the transition of this weapon from nomadic cultures to the Roman Empire through the 'Germanization' of the army of the Dominate period. Evidence for its use will be drawn from Greek primary sources (mainly histories, chronicles, and *Strategika*). The last part of the chapter will focus on the sources for the battles fought between Byzantine armies and nations that applied steppe battle-tactics, such as the Turks, the Bulgars, the Patzinaks and the Cumans, in an attempt to prove that the last effective mention of the lasso in the Byzantine army was by the author of the early tenth century *Taktika*.

It would be very tempting to attribute the introduction of the lasso in the eastern Mediterranean basin to the Hunnic or Avar influence coming from the steppes of Central Asia, but the lasso was known in the area of the eastern

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Mediterranean and the Black Sea already. Referring to the Sagartians,[1] a nomadic people of Iranian origin living next to the Medes in north-eastern Iran, Herodotus described their main battle weapons and tactics as follows:

> It is their custom to carry no armour of bronze or iron, save daggers only, and to use ropes of twisted leather. In these they trust when they go to battle; and this is their manner of fighting when they are at close quarters with their enemy, they throw their ropes, these having a noose at the end [*βάλλουσι τας σειράς ἐπ' ἄκρω βρόχους ἐχούσας*] and whatever they catch, be it horse or man, the thrower drags it to himself, and the enemy thus entangled in the prisoning coils is slain.[2]

Herodotus asserts that the Sagartians fought only with braided leather lassoes and daggers. Judging by ethnography and location, their daggers would, most likely, have been of an akinakes type – a curved sabre, single or double-edged – used since, at least, the seventh century B.C.[3] They fought from horseback by snaring enemy men or horses and dragging them close, presumably dispatching them with the dagger.

The other reference on the use of the lasso comes from Pausanias who, in his *Description of Greece*, referred to the ensnaring tactics of the Sarmatians: "They throw a lasso [*σειραῖς* (dative, plural) from *σειρά*: cord or line with a noose, lasso] round any enemy they meet, and then turning round their horses upset the enemy caught in the lasso."[4] The Sarmatians were an Iranian-speaking people who had replaced the Scythians, to whom they were ethnically related, by the second century B.C. along the northern shores of the Black Sea and into Moesia.[5] Thus, they came into direct contact with the Roman Empire and

1 Herodotus describes the Sagartians as a Persian tribe in I.125 but elsewhere treats them as a separate people. He was the last of the Ancient Greek authors to mention the Sagartians, probably because other Greek writers did not distinguish them from other Iranian-speakers. For further reference: Eilers, 'Asagarta', Vol. II, Fasc. 7, p. 701; Melyukova, "The Scythians and the Sarmatians", pp. 97-117.

2 Herodotus, *Histories*, VII.85.

3 Herodotus mentions the *akinakes* (*ἀκινάκης*) as a Scythian type of sword: *Histories*, III.128; IV.62, 69; Melyukova, "The Scythians and the Sarmatians", p. 109; Babuin, "Τα Επιθετικά Όπλα των Βυζαντινών", pp. 26-28, especially n. 24; Nicolle, "*Byzantine and Islamic Arms and Armour*", pp. 303-05.

4 Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.21.5.

5 Melyukova, "The Scythians and the Sarmatians", pp. 109-17.

were recognised as a formidable enemy. They were particularly fearsome for their horsemanship, their skill with the bow and their feigned retreat tactics.[6]

Another nomadic nation fighting in, more or less, the same way as the Scythians and the Sarmatians were the Huns.[7] They were able to put to the field an army consisting mainly, but not exclusively, of lightly armed horsemen carrying a composite bow, a sword and a lasso for closer encounters with enemy units. Despite the fact that Ammianus compiled his account of the Hunnic cavalry from Goths who had fought against the Huns, the picture which he paints clearly portrays these warriors immersed in the same steppe tradition to be seen again later in the Turks and the Mongols. What made them stand out was not simply their ferocity as warriors, but also their emphasis on manoeuvrability and their feigned retreat tactics which were accompanied by a shower of arrows capable of startling and frustrating any enemy unit.

There is no known contemporary representation of a Hunnic warrior of the period. Ammianus Marcellinus, himself an experienced military officer, wrote of them in 392 AD:

> They also sometimes fight when provoked, and then they enter the battle drawn up in wedge-shaped masses, while their medley of voices makes a savage noise [...] And on this account you would not hesitate to call them the most terrible of all warriors, because they fight from a distance with missiles having sharp bone, instead of their usual points, joined to the shafts with wonderful skill; then they gallop over the intervening spaces and fight hand to hand with swords, regardless of their own lives; and while the enemy are guarding against wounds from the sabre-thrusts, they throw strips of cloth plaited into nooses over their opponents and so entangle them that they fetter their limbs and take from them the power of riding or walking.[8]

The Greek noun *σῶκος* (verb: *σωκίζω*), also appearing as *σόκκος* and *βρόχος* (verb: *βροχίζω*), is quite rare and only attested in written sources less than ten times until the ninth century. All variations assume the meaning of rope, lasso, noose and/or slip-knot, depending on whether the authors were describing a battle scene, a duel between individual champions or a hunting scene. Perhaps the most prominent incident in Byzantine military history regarding the use of a lasso in battle was at the second battle of Markelai in 792 AD (not to be

6 Morillo et al., *War in World History,* pp. 105-10.

7 The best study on the topic is: Maenchen-Helfen, *World of the Huns*.

8 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum gestarum libri,* XXXI.2, *7-10.*

confused with the first battle in the same area in 756 AD), when the emperor Constantine VI was allegedly lassoed and captured by the Bulgars. This incident is described in the two versions of the *Life of St. Ioannikios* (d. 846),[9] and it is the earlier version, written shortly after the Saint's death, which explains that Ioannikios allegedly saved the life of Constantine VI during the battle:

> And when both [armies] were drawn up at a place called Markellai, there was a clash between them, and the Christians were defeated on account of our sins and turned their backs to the enemy; the enemy was pursuing from behind and exacting severe casualties, so that even the emperor himself, after being lassoed by some device [*ὑπο τίνος μηχανήματος σωκισθέντα*], was captured, dragged off and held by those impious men. Having seen this, that most noble Ioannikios, impelled by divine zeal and, to speak with the prophet, girded with power from on high, courageously leapt into their midst and with a sword severing that snare (which I would call a diabolical contrivance) most quickly, miraculously saved the emperor.[10]

This version of the description of the battle points to the use of a type of lasso in battle and, in fact, during the pursuit of the retreating Byzantine army by the Bulgars.[11] This weapon was referred to by the Bulgars as *arkani* – probably of Iranian origin – and consisted of a long pole with an attachment similar to a lasso at one end. It would have been a brilliant weapon against cavalry, as the rider could easily be pulled down from the saddle by a skilled warrior armed with the *arkani*. The same type of lasso would be seen again in action against the Latins in Adrianople in 1205.

A number of scholars, however, have cast doubt on the report of the author of the *Life of St. Ioannikios*, who most likely adapted the episode with the lasso between the Emperor and the Bulgarians from a similar incident described by John Malalas, and repeated by Theophanes, in order to turn his saint into a hero.[12] This incident had to do with a Bulgar incursion into Thrace in 538/9 where Malalas mentions the capture of Constantine, the *magister militum per Thracias*, by the Bulgars using a lasso:

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9 These two versions – along with some interesting commentary – can be found in: Speck, *Kaiser Konstantin VI*. See also: Mango, "St. Ioannikios and the Bulgarians", pp. 393-404.

10 Greek text and English translation taken from: Sullivan, 'Markelai', p. 288 and n. 5.

11 For more on the second battle of Markellai: Zlatarski, *History of the Bulgarian State,* pp. 316-17.

12 Sullivan, 'Markelai', pp. 290-91; Mango, "St. Ioannikios and the Bulgarians", pp. 398-404.

> The Bulgars advanced as far as the districts of Thrace. Constantine, the *magister militum,* went against them, as did also Godilas, and Akoum the Hun [Bulgar], *magister militum per Illyricum,* to whom the emperor had stood as baptismal sponsor. Surrounding the Bulgars, they cut them down and killed a great mass of them, stripped them of all the booty, and gained a complete victory, even killing their two kings. As they were returning joyfully, other Bulgars met them, and as the *magistri militum* were weary, they turned their backs in retreat. The Bulgars gave chase and lassoed [*ἐσόκευσαν*] Constantine, Akoum, and Godilas as they fled. Godilas cut the lasso [*σόκον*] with his dagger and slipped out, but Constantine and Akoum were captured alive.[13]

In both incidents described in the *Life of St. Ioannikios* and in the Chronicles of Malalas and Theophanes, the lasso was used by the Bulgars in their typical steppe-fashion attacks combined with the setting of traps against the enemy units. In the former case it was the defeated Byzantine army that was pursued by some Bulgar detachments, while in the latter the 'joyful' and, presumably, careless Byzantines failed to notice the trap that was set up by their enemies on their way back to Imperial territory. Both times, the Byzantines were put on the retreat, something which offered the Bulgars the opportunity to give chase and use their manoeuvrability and the lasso to their ultimate effect.

Individual duels between champions in order to settle a battle and/or a siege – or, perhaps, even the war – are a tradition that goes back several millennia to biblical times.[14] Perhaps the most famous individual duel in Eastern Roman sources is the one described by Ioannes Malalas in 422 AD between a Goth *comes foederatorum* in the service of the Roman Emperor, called Areobindus, who was hand-picked to fight a Persian champion in order to settle the war between the Roman and Persian Empires:

> In that year Blasses, emperor of the Persians, advanced to make war on the Romans. When he was about to engage in battle, the Persian emperor sent him [the Roman Emperor] a message, "If your whole force has a man able to fight in single combat and to defeat a Persian selected by me, I

13 Malalas, *Chronographia*, p. 366; *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, p. 254; Theophanes Confessor, *Chronography*, vol. 1, p. 218; *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, p. 317.

14 Van Creveld, *Wargames*, pp. 39-47. The most famous duel is the one between biblical David and Goliath but they are also found in other Near Eastern civilisations, and in classical epics like the Iliad. Van Creveld points out the semi-mythological status of these early encounters.

> shall immediately make a peace-treaty for 50 years with the customary provision of gifts". When these terms had been agreed, the emperor of the Persians chose a Persian named Ardazanes from the division known as the Immortals, while the Romans selected Areobindus, a Gothic *comes foederatorum*. The two came out on horseback fully armed. Areobindus also carried a lasso [*σόκκαριν*], as is the Gothic custom. The Persian charged at him first with his lance, but Areobindus, bending down to his right, lassoed [*ἐσόκκευσεν*] him, brought him down off his horse and killed him.[15]

The Goths used the lasso in combat, as it is attested by the aforementioned source, and they probably took it from the Huns and the Alans.[16] But already in the fourth century, the Goths were settled in the Roman Empire as a separate community and were decreed a number of privileges including a certain degree of autonomy in exchange for military service under a Roman *dux*. The question of the 'barbarization' – or 'Germanization' – of the Roman Empire remains open, with the orthodox position being best represented by Ramsey Macmullen,[17] who maintains that from the time of Constantine Germans formed the bulk of the Roman military forces. The question of whether or not Rome succeeded in integrating these *foederati* – the question of ethnic identity – remains contentious and has to be seen in perspective; thus, I wish to avoid being drawn into this debate as it is beyond the scope of the present study. It is undeniable, however, that the mass recruitment of barbarian mercenaries – especially following Theodosius' treaty with the Goths in 382 AD – and the settlement of their families within the empire had a profound effect on the Roman military of the period and ultimately brought about significant changes to its structure and organization.[18]

Eastern Roman military technology was significantly affected by the movements of various nations along its northern borders in the centuries leading up to the collapse of its western part, and it is a fact that the Roman Empire maintained regular contacts with these distant peoples, so that elements of central

15 Malalas, p. 285; *Chronicle of John Malalas*, p. 199; *Anecdota Græca*, II, p. 309.

16 See the attack of the Alans against the Armenian King Tiridates I in 72-73, where the Alans were using a *βρόχον* to trap the king: Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 7.250. See also the lassoing of a bishop by a 'Scythian': Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 7.26.8 [p. 355]. For more on this issue: Maenchen-Helfen, *World of the Huns*, p. 240; Morillo et al., *War in World History*, pp. 109-10.

17 McMullen, *Corruption and the Decline of Rome*, pp. 201-04.

18 Lee, *War in Late Antiquity,* pp. 79-85; Stickler, "The Foederati", pp. 495-514. In the same collective volume: Whitby, "Army and Society in the Late Roman World", pp. 515-31.

Asian, and even more easterly, military panoply and practices were gradually incorporated into its military mechanism.[19] The introduction of the stirrup through the Avars is but one example of the aforementioned fact, but the focus here is on the influence these 'outsiders' had on the use of the lasso by the Byzantines.

Sources like Procopius and the *Strategikon* suggest that the impact of the Avars in the Byzantine armies of the sixth century was particularly powerful. According to Procopius, the best-armed Roman horseman was equipped with a lance and a sword that was hung from a baldric or a shoulder strap on his left shoulder.[20] The *Strategikon* refers to cavalry spears in shapes similar to those used by the Avars, which supplemented the swords of the cavalry, and of 'Herul' swords for the infantry.[21] It is the passage referring to the armament of the cavalryman, however, that draws attention: "The saddles should have large and thick cloths; the bridles should be of good quality; attached to the saddles should be two iron stirrups [*σκάλα*], a lasso with thong [*λωρόσσοκον*: **λῶρος**, ὁ, = (Lat. lorum), thong; **σόκκος**, ὁ, lasso], a hobble [*πέδικλον*], and a saddle bag large enough to hold three or four days' rations for the soldier when needed."[22]

Both the lasso and the hobble were included in the equipment of the cavalryman as previously attested in probably the most famous of the *Strategika* or *Taktika* – literary works that contained constitutions and treatises of military nature – which was composed between 592 and 610 and whose composition has been variously attributed by modern scholars to Emperor Maurice, Urbicius and Philippicus (*magister militum per Orientem* and a brother-in-law of Emperor Maurice).[23] The military application of the lasso meant the disabling and/or the capturing of an enemy cavalryman based on the steppe mounted tradition introduced by the Avars and the Huns in previous centuries. Beyond their military use, however, the lasso and the hobble were employed during a campaign to restrain and rope together horses.[24]

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19 Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society,* pp. 128-29.

20 Procopius, I, i.9-15, pp. 6-7. See also: *Justinian's Novel 85*, c. 4 (539 AD).

21 *Maurice's Strategikon*, XII. B. 4, [p. 139].

22 Ibid., I.2, p. 13.

23 The literature on this discussion is summarized in: Cosentino, "Per una nuova edizione dei Naumachica ambrosiani", pp. 65-66. See also: Gyftopoulou, "Το «target group» του Στρατηγικού του Μαυρικίου," pp. 341-60.

24 Constantine Porphyrogennitus, *Three Treatises in Imperial Military Expeditions*, C. 83, 135, pp. 98, 102. The *λωρόσσοκον* has also been identified as a horse's feed-bag by many translators-editors, relating to the feeding of the horses on campaign. I would like to thank P. Rance for sending me his detailed footnote on this subject from his forthcoming book on: *Strategikon*: *The Roman Art of War in Late Antiquity: The Strategikon of the Emperor*

The aforementioned *Taktika* were repositories of military knowledge which greatly proliferated in the tenth century, with Leo VI's *Taktika* and the *Military Praecepts* of Nicephorus Phocas (*c.* 969) taking centre stage.[25] This kind of military literature is one of the fields in which cultural continuity between the Graeco-Roman world and Byzantium is more pronounced.[26] Leo's *Taktika*, which had been edited in twenty constitutions, makes extensive use of Maurice's *Strategikon*, as does the other of Leo's military treatise known as the *Problemata*. Nevertheless, we should bear in mind that these manuals were conscious adaptations to the geopolitical realities of the day and encouraged improvisation in the battlefield rather than simply copying and passing on obsolete battle-tactics.[27]

Thus, it is rather remarkable that the lasso was still being required in the equipment of the cavalryman some three centuries after the probable compilation of the *Strategikon*, at the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth centuries: "Slings as well, large saddlebags, flint and tinder, lasso with thong [*λωρόσσοκον*], crescent-shaped iron horseshoes with their nails, small files and awls, armour for the heads of the horses, breastplates of iron or quilting for the shoes, and similar covering for the necks."[28] Despite the fact that the author is using the same term for the lasso with a thong, he does not seem to be copying the *Strategikon* and his text appears as an original description of a ninth and tenth century cavalryman's equipment.

Other references to the use of the lasso by the Byzantines come from the field of epic poetry and the *Άσμα Του Θεοφυλάκτου* [The Song of Theophylaktos].[29] This particular poem dates to the period between the eighth and tenth centuries and the anonymous author examines the events taking place in the island of Cyprus between the years 646 and 802, placing particular emphasis on the raids of the Arabs. This work has been classified as a heroic/erotic epic poem

Maurice. A Translation with Commentary and Textual Studies ([Birmingham Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Monographs] Ashgate, 2017). Vol. 1: Translation and Commentary; Vol. 2: Manuscripts and Textual Studies.

25 Nicephorus Phocas' *Military Praecepts* and an incomplete version of Nicephorus Uranus' *Taktika* can be found in: McGeer, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth*.

26 Theotokis, "From Ancient Greece to Byzantium", pp. 106-18; Cosentino, "Writing about War in Byzantium," pp. 83-99.

27 Kolias, "Η Πολεμική Τακτική των Βυζαντινών", pp. 153-64.

28 Leo VI, *Taktika*, v.3, p. 76. See also the commentary in the new edition of: Haldon, *A Critical Commentary on the Taktika of Leo VI*, p. 178.

29 Sakellariou-Agiopetritou, *Τα Κυπριακά*, p. xv; Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, II, pp. ρξ-ρξβ′.

where the hero, Theophylact – probably a local *cleisourarch* – takes it upon himself to free his brother from Arab captivity:[30]

Θεέ, κι αν είμαι πλάσμα σου, Χριστέ κι επακεσέν μου, έδωσε και διανάφανεν αρφός του, Αλιάντρης.	Oh God, I am your creation, Christ listen to me, there appeared his brother, Aliantres.
Από μακριά φωνάζει του, από κοντά λαλεί του: -Εγλέπ, εγλέπ'αρφούλη μου, αρφούλη μ'Αλιάντρη, στο γύρισμα του μαύρου σου, στο κλώσμα του σπαθιού σου, έχει μικρά Σαρακηνά, γέροντες αρκουδιώντες, και στήνουν τα *βροχόλουρα* και γλέπου να σε πιάσουν.	From afar he shouts at him, from up close he tells him: Be careful, be careful my little brother, my little brother Aliantres, at the turn of your black [horse], at the thrust of your sword, there are little Saracen [boys], crawling old men, and they set up snares to trap you.

The anonymous author of the epic poem used the noun *βροχόλουρα* [βρόχος, ὁ, noose, slip-knot; λῶρος, ὁ, = thong] to describe the "diabolical contrivance" used by the enemies of Aliantres to 'ensnare' him. Throughout the poem, the noun seems to have a rather belittling meaning as a weapon of young children and cowards.

In Sassanid Persia, the martial equipment of a heavily armed horseman also included a lasso (neo-Persian: *kamand*; Pahlavi: *gyān-nizār*),[31] and the late tenth century epic poem *Shahnameh* (*c*. 977-1010) by Firdowsi makes it clear that the *kamand* was considered useful for livestock, handling, hunting, and warfare.[32] In fact, an inventory of the equipment ascribed to a Sassanid cavalryman at the time of Khosroe Anosirwan, described by al-Tabari,[33] bears great similarities to the list in the *Strategikon*, which certainly points to the gradual orientalisation of the Roman armies in the fifth and sixth centuries. Other Oriental sources provide references for the use of the lasso to capture an enemy, including the Persian *Varqa o Golšāh*[34] (eleventh century), a love story between a youth named Varqa and a maiden named Golšāh, the Turkish epic

30 Sakellariou-Agiopetritou, *Τα Κυπριακά*, pp. 9-11, verses 35-48.

31 Shahbazi, "Army in Pre-Islamic Iran," Vol. II, Fasc. 5, pp. 489-99.

32 Ferdowsi Tousi, *Shahnameh,* pp. 22, 35, 59, 61, 62, 63, 96, 98, 116, 130; Gulchin, "Literary Translation of Firdosi's Episode of Rostam and Sohrab", pp. 131-33.

33 *The History of al-Tabari*, vol. V, pp. 262-63; Shahbazi, "Army in Pre-Islamic Iran", p. 494.

34 Melikian-Chirvâni, "Le roman de Varqe et Golšâh", verse 1133B, p. 158.

poem *Danishmandname*[35] (twelfth to thirteenth centuries), and the late thirteenth century Mamluk manuscript, *Nihayat al Su'l*, a manual on horsemanship, military arts and technology.[36]

Very few pictorial representations of the use of the lasso in combat have been preserved in frescoes, mosaics or manuscript illuminations and, unfortunately, none of them represent a scene with a Byzantine soldier using the weapon in battle. Rather, we have a small number of beautiful illuminations of battle scenes in Oriental manuscripts like the early thirteenth century manuscript of *Varqa o Golšāh* in the Topkapi Palace Library (Hazine 841). This is the only copy of the Persian poet Ayyuqi's eleventh century romantic poem and the manuscript – generally held to be a product of early thirteenth century Seljuk Anatolia (probably Konya) by an Azeri artist from Khuy – is also the earliest surviving example of an illustrated book containing a literary Persian text.[37] Another valuable source is the already mentioned Shahnameh or "Book of Kings", perhaps the longest poem ever written by a single author: Abu'l-Qasim Hasan Firdawsi, from Tus in northeastern Iran, written between 997 and 1010, and dedicated to the most powerful ruler of the time, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna.[38] A way for the poet to convey his messages was, of course, the commission of illuminated manuscripts, which began *c*. 1300 and continued into the late nineteenth century.[39]

As I have highlighted numerous times already, the use of the lasso was not restricted to warfare and there are depictions of soldiers using it for hunting purposes. The Church of the Apostles in the town of Madaba, an important centre of mosaic artistry in the Empire decorated with mosaics dating from the year 578 AD by the artist Salamanios, contains a mosaic of what appears to be a man capturing two peacocks.[40] Another hunter with a lasso is depicted in the chapel of Elijah, Mary and Soreg in Gerasa-Jerash (another important centre of mosaic art in Provincia Arabia), a complex which contains mosaics from the fifth to the seventh centuries, with the particular mosaic probably dating to the first decade of the seventh century AD.[41] Finally, there is a beautiful mosaic in the British Museum of a horseman, probably a Vandal, lassoing a deer.

35 *La Geste de Melik Danişmend,* I, p. 304.

36 Lutful-Huq, *A Critical Edition of Nihayat al-Su'l*, pp. 332-34.

37 Grube, *The World of Islam*, p. 73; Melikian-Chirvâni, "Varqe et Golšâh", pp. 79-80.

38 Further studies on the Shahnameh: Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. 1, pp. 110-23, and 2, pp. 129-45; Davidson, *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings*.

39 Clinton, "Ferdowsi and the Illustration of the Shahnameh", pp. 57-78.

40 Bienkowsky, *The Art of Jordan*, p. 117.

41 Ibid., pp. 111-12.

From what we can conclude thus far, the inventory of weapons of a cavalryman listed by the author of the early tenth century *Taktika* seems to contain the last mention of the lasso as a weapon used by the Byzantines in battle. None of the other military manuals of the tenth century or the histories and chronicles of the same and following centuries makes any reference to the lasso in the hands of Imperial soldiers.

To prove this point, I went through a number of histories and chronicles that describe the main battles of the period between the ninth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century, focusing on those that were fought between Imperial armies and nations that applied steppe tactics, like the Turks, the Bulgars, the Patzinaks, and the Cumans. For the ninth century, none of the main Byzantine sources for the Battle of Pliska (811)[42] and the Battle of Boulgarofygo (896)[43] mention the lasso, and the only source that refers to *βροχίδας* having been set by the Bulgarians to ensnare the future Emperor Basil I is the twelfth century *Synopsis* of Constantine Manasses.[44] This refers to the story according to which Basil had spent a part of his childhood in captivity in Bulgaria, where his family had allegedly been carried off as captives of the Khan Krum (r. 803-814) in 813.[45] Basil lived there until 836, when he and several others escaped to Byzantine-held territory in Thrace.

The evidence of the sources for the main battles of the tenth century are equally disappointing and I have been unable to find any reference of a lasso being used at Achelous (917)[46] or the Rus-Bulgarian wars of 970-71.[47] Of special interest is the luring of the unit of Patzinaks into an ambush set by Bardas Phocas and executed by the patrician John Alakasseus in a location close to the

42 *Theophanis Chronographia*, vol. I, p. 490; *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, pp. 672-73; Symeon Logothetes, *Chronicon*, p. 207; Stephenson, "About the Emperor Nikephoros", pp. 87-109.

43 Scylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, pp. 175-78; Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, pp. 170-73; Symeon the Logothete, pp. 277-78; Theophanes Continuates, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius monachus, p. 360.

44 "Τὰς παλαμναίας δὲ φυγὼν *βροχίδας* τῶν Βουλγάρων ἐπέστη πτερυξάμενος αὖθις Ῥωμαίων ὅροις": Having fled the avenging/miscreant nets of the Bulgarians, he [Basil] set his wings back again towards Roman lands: Manasses, *Chronological Synopsis*, p. 278.

45 Theophanes Continuates, *Liber V Vita Basilii Imperatoris*, pp. 20-22.

46 Skylitzes, pp. 202-05; *Synopsis*, pp. 197-98; Theophanes Continuates, pp. 388-90.

47 Leo Diaconus, *Historiae*, CSHB 4, IV.v-vi, pp. 61-63 [Leo the Deacon, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, pp. 109-113] (against the Bulgars); book VIII, pp. 128-41 [pp. 175-86] and IX.i-vi, pp. 142-50 [pp. 187-94] (against the Rus). For Arkadiopolis (970): Skylitzes, CFHB, pp. 287-91; *Synopsis*, pp. 279-82. For Dorystolo (971): Skylitzes, CFHB, pp. 298-310; *Synopsis*, pp. 282-94.

town of Arkadiopolis in Bulgaria in 970, where the Byzantines faced a mixed army of Rus, Patzinaks, and Magyars. Unfortunately, the ensuing *melée* and the pursuit of the main army of the Patzinaks by the Byzantine army are not described in any detail by Skylitzes or by Leo the Deacon and we can only imagine a struggle of endurance between the two armies fighting in close quarters and in a confined space.

The lasso is equally absent from the primary sources narrating the Byzantine wars in Cilicia and northern Syria against the Hamdanids of Aleppo in the middle of the tenth century, a period of expansion which was dominated by the annual raids conducted by the Byzantines and the Hamdanids over the Taurus Mountains. The Muslim sources for the period, like Yahya Ibn-Said, Al-Mutanabbi, Ibn-Zafir, and Abu Firas, are much more detailed in their accounts than Leo the Deacon and Skylitzes when it comes to placenames, rivers, unidentified castles, and numbers for the armies campaigning in the region. Nonetheless, their narratives lack the necessary details regarding the course of the battles fought between Byzantine and Arab armies, battlefield manoeuvres, and the consistency and armament of the units taking part.

We also have no indication about any possible use of the lasso in the *De Administrando Imperio*. This is a monumental manual of diplomacy and administration of the Byzantine Empire written between the years 948 and 952 by the Emperor Constantine VII for his heir apparent, consisting of several sections on nations neighbouring the empire, including two on the nations of the Patzinaks and the Magyars.[48]

Crossing over to the eleventh century, the geopolitical events that dominate this period are undoubtedly the appearance of the Seljuk Turks in Anatolia and the crossing of the Danube River by the Patzinaks in the fourth decade of the century. For the invasion of Byzantine territory by Tyrach and Kegen and the subsequent settlement of tens of thousands in the areas between Sofia and Nis in 1047, our sources reveal the employment of some 15,000 of them to be sent to the east against the Seljuks the following year, although they remained restless and had to be put down several times by force by the Emperors Constantine IX Monomachus and his successor, Constantine X Doucas, who dispatched large-scale campaigns to 'pacify' them, in 1052 and 1059. In both cases, the Byzantines were beaten back by guerrilla-war tactics and the weather.[49]

48 Constantinus Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, pp. 166-70 (on the Patzinaks) and pp. 170-74 (on the Magyars).

49 Angold, *The Byzantine Empire,* pp. 37-40. Our main primary sources are: Skylitzes, CFHB, pp. 455-73; *Synopsis*, pp. 429-40; Zonaras, III, pp. 641-44; Attaleiates, pp. 30-37. Cecaumenos, *Strategikon*, pp. 22-23.

Although neither Skylitzes or Attaleiates specifically refer to the use of the lasso by the opposing forces, the former does mention the use of "ropes and thongs with which to detain the captives" [*καλώδια και λῶρους πρός το δέσμειν τους ἁλισκομένους*] by the army of Nicephorus the rector, Katakalon Kekaumenus and Hèrve Frankopoulos, when they were dispatched against the Patzinaks through the "Iron Gates" of the Haemus Mountains. The reference made to a κἄλώδιον [*small cord*] and λῶρος [*thong*] to detain captives during a military operation in hostile territory would confirm an additional use of the thong/lasso that very rarely appears in the primary sources, despite the fact that it would have been used extensively by the Byzantine armies.[50]

Detachments of Patzinaks and Oguz Turks campaigned with the army of Romanus IV Diogenes in 1071 (although their exact number is unknown) but no report of a lasso is made by our primary sources.[51] Neither do they mention anything during their narration of the Battle of Kalavryae (1078) between the armies of the Domesticus of the West, Alexius Comnenus, and the rebel Nicephorus Botaneiates.[52] One must bear in mind that Botaneiates had in his service a contingent of Patzinak mercenaries of unknown size situated at a mile's distance from the main army, ready to outflank the Imperial units.[53] Bryennius does mention a Patzinak attack against Comnenus' troops from Choma, but no reference to a lasso can be confirmed.[54] The same can be said about the sources for the Patzinak Wars (1087-90)[55] that culminated in the Battle of Levounion (1091),[56] and the Cuman Wars of 1094/95.[57]

An exception would be an incident reported by Anna Comnena just before the Battle of Tzouroulon (1090), when her father was employing hit-and-run tactics against the numerically superior army of the Patzinaks that was raiding the region south of the Haemus and along the Hebros/Maritsa River. During this episode, a Byzantine officer was ensnared and captured by a Patzinak

50 Skylitzes, CFHB, p. 468; *Synopsis*, p. 437.

51 Attaleiates calls them indiscriminately Scyths: Attaleiates, pp. 127, 148. The Turkish sources for the battle, with commentary, can be found in: Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol*, pp. 26-143.

52 Tobias, "The Tactics and Strategy of Alexius Comnenus", pp. 193-211.

53 The composition of both armies and details of the battle are given by: Annae Comnenae, *Alexias*, I.iv-vi, pp. 18-27 [Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, pp. 10-15]; Zonaras, III, pp. 716-17.

54 Bryennius, Nicephorus, *Material for History*, p. 273.

55 Anna Comnena, Book VII, pp. 203-35 [pp. 119-37]; Birkenmeier, *The Development of the Komnenian Army*, pp. 71-75.

56 Anna Comnena, Book VIII, pp. 236-57 [pp. 138-51].

57 Ibid., X. iv, pp. 290-95 [pp. 172-74].

woman using a device resembling a scimitar/sickle, before being dragged into the Patzinak wagon laager:

> Before the truce was made, a man named Neantzes deserted to the Romans. Then Migidemus was sent to fetch in recruits from the adjacent regions; in a battle which occurred later at a place [...] this man's son whilst making a fierce dash against the Patzinaks was snared and captured by a Scythian woman and dragged into the circle of their [Scythian] wagons with an iron sickle [*ἅρπη*].[58]

For the wars of the Comnenoi against the Patzinaks and the Hungarians in the twelfth century, John Kinnamos recounts in relative detail the Byzantine-Patzinak battle near Beroia in 1122[59] that resulted in victory for the former, the Byzantine-Hungarian War of 1127-28[60] in which the Byzantines also prevailed over their Balkan rivals, and Manuel Comnenus' victory in the second conflict with Hungary between 1166 and 1167[61] regarding the issue of the succession of Bela III in the Hungarian throne. Regretfully, however, Kinnamos does not indicate the use of the lasso in any of the aforementioned conflicts. Conversely, the noun *βρόχο(υ)ς* is cited twice by Nicetas Choniates in his *History*; first, he narrates the story of Andronicus Palaeologus and his escape from the captivity of the Vlachs: "While they watched the dummy, he took cover in the corpse and saved himself by fleeing like a gazelle from the noose [*ἐκ βρόχων*], like a bird from the snare [*ἐκ παγίδος*]."[62]

More important than the aforementioned hunting metaphor is Choniates' use of the *βρόχος* in another part of his *History*, a battle scene which probably describes the Bulgarian arkani in use by the Cumans against the Latins outside Adrianople on 14 April 1205:

> The Latins, exhausted from the exertion of the chase, with horses thoroughly spent, were ensnared by the unwearied Cuman troops, cut off, and encircled. Overpowered by the multitude of Cumans in hand-to hand combat, they were thrown from their horses. One was surrounded by many: the throats of the stiff-necked were exposed to the scimitar [*δρέπανα*] or to the noose [*βρόχους*], and many of their horses were mutilated.

58 Ibid., VII. vi, pp. 219-20 [p. 128].

59 Cinnami, *Epitome*, CSHB, p. 8; Kinnamos, *Deeds*, pp. 15-16.

60 Cinnami, *Epitome*, CSHB, pp. 9-11; Kinnamos, *Deeds*, pp. 17-19.

61 Cinnami, *Epitome*, CSHB, pp. 271-74; Kinnamos, *Deeds*, pp. 202-05.

62 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 131; *O' City of Byzantium*, p. 75.

> As the Cumans fell upon them like a never-ending black cloud, they could not disentangle themselves from the horses or find any means of escape.[63]

Conclusions

The lasso has been used in such an extensive geographical area and for such a long period of time that we cannot assign it to any particular culture. We tend to attribute its appearance in Europe to the Huns, owing to the vivid reports of Ammianus Marcellinus dating from the end of the fourth century AD, despite the fact that he himself – although an experienced military officer – had never witnessed a Hunnic attack in his life and had based his accounts on Gothic intelligence. In fact, its origins in the eastern Mediterranean basin can be traced much further back in time. It has spawned in the Eurasian steppes at least some 2,500 years back, as it was popular amongst pastoral peoples of Iranian extraction like the Scythians, the Sagartians, the Sarmatians, the Iazyges, and other nations between the Don River and India.[64]

The culture of the pastoral nomads in the Eurasian steppes was dominated by three key factors: equestrian proficiency, herds of grazing animals, and the use of oxen-pulled wagons; all of the aforementioned factors were combined to give the nomads their well-known mobility in open spaces. More specifically, horse prowess and the development of riding skills were essential components of nomadic life, underlining the special relationship between rider and his horse in those cultures, not just for purely military purposes but for everyday life in the steppes; in fact, distinguishing between these two is a misnomer. Thus, the use of the lasso can be identified with the routine pasturing of horses, hunting, or with the pursuit and bringing down of enemy combatants from their horses in battle, including the ransoming of distinguished captives who might attract high ransoms.

The nouns *σῶκος* and *βρόχος* are quite rare and only attested in Greek sources less than ten times until the ninth century. They take the meaning of rope, lasso, noose and/or slip-knot, based on whether the authors were describing a battle scene, a duel between individual champions or a hunting scene. In this handful of accounts of the use of the lasso by Byzantine troops in Greek sources, the most prominent are probably the alleged lassoing of Constantine VI at Markelai in 792 AD, and the duel between a Persian and a Goth *comes foederatorum* in the service of the Roman Emperor in 422 AD.

63 Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, CFHB, p. 616; *O' City of Byzantium,* p. 337.

64 Maenchen-Helfen, *World of the Huns*, p. 240.

Cultural interaction with the Germanic nations and especially the Goths, as they were the ones who took over the lasso from the Huns and the Alans, in combination with the coming of the Avars in the sixth century would have triggered a gradual change in the Roman warfare of the period. By the sixth century there would have been a new model of Roman cavalryman capable of fighting both with a bow and a lance, and sources like Procopius and the *Strategikon* highlight a concrete 'oriental' influence upon contemporary Imperial panoply. For the authors of the military manuals of the early and middle Byzantine period, the lasso was listed in the military equipment of the cavalry soldiers in the early seventh century *Strategikon*, later to be repeated but not copied by the early tenth century *Taktika* of Leo VI. But the question that I wish to raise at this point is why the rest of the military manuals of the tenth century, such as the *Sylloge Taktikorum* or the *Praecepta Militaria*, remain silent. Had the lasso become obsolete by the middle of the tenth century AD?

In my effort to track down any references for the use of the lasso in the Balkans and Asia Minor by or against Imperial troops between the years 792 (second battle of Markelai) and 1205 (Battle of Adrianople), I have been able to identify only four references regarding the use of the lasso in battle (this means that I have excluded hunting scenes). What is even more frustrating is that in none of these cases was the lasso used by Imperial troops. Rather, it was used by their enemies: the Bulgars, the Patzinaks or the Cumans – nations fighting in typical steppe fashion. But the question remains: why is there no single mention of Imperial troops using the lasso after the early tenth century?

Perhaps the lasso was no longer included in the attire of a Byzantine cavalryman because of the increased employment of large bodies of mercenaries after the middle of the tenth century. Mercenaries in Byzantium could mean many things, like those soldiers who were remunerated through grants of cash, land and/or the right to state revenues and were employed either for a specific period of time (i.e. a campaign) or indefinitely: the four imperial *tagmata* may be seen in this light, as well as the units occasionally recruited by emperors for special service, such as the special naval troops raised by Michael II, the Tessarakontarioi, or the Tzakones as guards and marines.[65]

The practice of granting arable land to soldiers goes back to Roman times, and I did mention the settlement of thousands of Patzinaks in the regions between Sofia and Nis in the middle of the eleventh century – the Cumans were settled in Anatolia by John Vatatzes. To that can be added the multiethnic

65 For more on the mercenaries in the Byzantine armies after the tenth century: Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society*, pp. 123-26; Bartusis, *The Late Byzantine Army, Arms and Society,* chapter 7; Kyriakides, *Warfare in Late Byzantium*, chapter 4.

character the Byzantine army had already acquired by the turn of the eleventh century – as even Arab contemporary historians attest with amazement, and the substantial numbers of foreign troops supplied through treaty arrangements by the Comnenoi show – whether Cuman, Alan, Georgian, Serb, Armenian, Norman or German.[66] In this light, was it really the lasso that was becoming obsolete? Rather, it could be argued that it was the Byzantine army that was becoming multiethnic and perhaps the lasso was no longer deemed a necessary weapon for a 'Roman' cavalryman, since they already had the Patzinaks and the Cumans to serve as light cavalry.

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66 Birkenmeier, *Komnenian Army*, chapters 3 and 4. The multiethnic character of the Byzantine army (Rus, Bulgars, Armenians) is highlighted already in the middle of the tenth century by three Muslim sources reporting the Byzantine-Hamdanid conflict in Cilicia and Syria: Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes*, Volume II, Part II, p. 125 [Ibn Zafir]; p. 333, verse 14 [Mutanabbi]; p. 364 [Abu Firas].

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CHAPTER 7

Post-Byzantine Art and Western Influences in Military Iconography: The Case of Staff Weapons in the Work of Michael Damaskenos

Iason-Eleftherios Tzouriadis

This essay explores Western influences in the representation of late medieval and early modern arms and armour in Byzantine art. It focuses in particular upon the works of the sixteenth-century Cretan painter, Michael Damaskenos, and especially the staff weapons depicted in his paintings. The problem of identifying and studying late and post-Byzantine military equipment is a great and interesting subject, which, however, will not be discussed here.[1] The paintings that will be examined include famous works of the artist, as well as only recently identified and published works of art such as the four paintings of *the Life of Saint Nicholas* in Corfu.[2] The artist belonged to the great tradition of the Cretan School of painters, which emerged in Venetian-controlled Crete between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. The unique features of the Cretan School include: the high contrast between a base of darker colour and bright highlights; use of hard lines to highlight faces and garments; subtle or striking western influences which are harmoniously blended together. Western themes and concepts in the depiction of military equipment can be observed in the work of many representative artists of the School such as Theofanes the Cretan, George Klotzas, Emmanuel Tzanes, Nicholas Tzafoures and John Moskos.[3] With the exception of battle depictions, which are unusual in post-

1 An extensive research on the problems encountered in this field, as well as a suggested methodology to approach and fill in on gaps in material culture from the discussed period can be found in Andrea Babuin's doctoral thesis on late Byzantine weapons. Babuin, *Τα επιθετικά όπλα των Βυζαντινών κατά την ύστερη περίοδο (1204-1453)*, 2 vols., Ioannina 2009.

2 Michael Damaskenos, *The Life of Saint Nicholas*, Corfu, Temple of Saint Nicholas of Geronton.

3 Chatzedakes' and Drakopoulou's monumental work on Greek painters after the fall of Constantinople included brief profiles for all the mentioned Cretan representatives. The three volumes include information on their lives and artistic style, as well as examples of their work. This work provides valuable information, and is an excellent resource for an initial comparison of the artistic production of painters and the themes they used in the examined period. Chatzedakes/Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450-1850)*, 3 vols., Athens 1987/1997/2010.

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Byzantine art, but are popular in Western Europe during this period, the thematic group that is popular in both traditions and which includes in their depictions extensive examples of staff weapons and other arms and armour is that of religious iconography. Scenes such as the Nativity or the Crucifixion usually include soldiers who are often depicted with the discussed equipment. Therefore, staff weapons are present when the tactical army (Romans) or the city guards are depicted, which is entwined with the development of warfare in the sixteenth century.

Before discussing the representation of weapons in Damaskenos' works, it is useful to provide some brief biographical details of him, and explain why his work was significant. Damaskenos, as mentioned earlier, is considered a major representative of the Cretan School of post-Byzantine painting, second to fame only perhaps to El Greco.[4] Damaskenos was born in Chandakas of the Venetian controlled Crete in the third decade of the sixteenth century and he was taught his art in the Sinaitic Saint Catherine monastery. In the third quarter of the sixteenth century he travelled and worked in Venice until 1583/84, where he and his workshop took the prestigious commission of painting the *San Giorgio dei Greci*.[5] On his way to Venice and back to Crete he most likely spent a significant amount of time producing several icons there. He spent the last years of his life working in Crete. Damaskenos produced numerous works, including portable icons of various sizes. What is also unique about this great artist is that there is only fragmental information about him and hopefully more works will resurface to shed some light on his life. Most of his works are identified by inscriptions of the artist himself signing the painting, or by documents that were used as receipts for the services provided by the artist. The same documents are used to track the artist's travels and the places he visited and where he produced specific paintings.[6]

Damaskenos had a unique style, combining the earlier Byzantine tradition and conservative forms and themes with the strong western mannerism. The aforementioned artistic elements of the Cretan School can be found widespread in his works used every time to a different extent. The forms of his

4 Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco) needs to be excluded as a point of comparison because of his complete transition to a western style, which of course influenced his perception and depiction of material culture.

5 Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση* (*1450-1850*), vol. 3, Athens 2010, pp. 232-33.

6 Receipts, contracts, and other documents are discussed by Drakopoulou, who attempts to reconstruct Damaskenos' path from Crete to Italy and back again, through the places where he and his workshop produced certain works of art. The author also provides an extensive and detailed list of the identified works of Damaskenos and the relevant secondary sources. Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση* (*1450-1850*), vol. 3, Athens 2010, pp. 233-241.

characters and objects are solid and plastic, brought to life by colours that either blend to create unique depths, or clash in solid contrast to focus on the subject. Through these artistic conventions, Damaskenos calls the viewer to become a communicant with him. The mannerist stance and detail of the bodies, the colours chosen for the shades of the skin, as well as the way that motion and gaze are illustrated, suggests the influence of western artistic stereotypes. Drakopoulou has extensively written about the pervasive presence of Western artistic elements in the work of Damaskenos. Stavropoulou has similarly identified specific western works by Tiziano, Durer, and Giovanni di Francesco that must have undoubtedly influenced Damaskenos during his stay in Italy, and how he integrated elements from these in his work.[7] Western influences and the fusion of eastern and western concepts are also visible when isolating the objects in Damaskenos' work, and especially in the depiction of military equipment. The identification of the origin of the armour worn by armoured figures in his work could be the subject of lengthy research. Soldiers are usually depicted wearing equipment that combines different eastern and western elements or simply following the romantic illustrational rules that were dominant at the time in the West, such as the heavily decorated open *Burgonet* and *Morion* helmets and solid decorated breastplates.[8] This artistic style reflects classical representations of heroes from antiquity, and when combined with the post-Byzantine Cretan style creates a unique and interesting combination.[9] The same principles apply for weapons, and in the case of this paper, staff weapons, which can be identified and compared easier because of their basic identifying features, the metal component mounted on a wooden shaft.

Staff weapons – always excluding the spear as a very basic and non-geographical definitive form – appear on numerous works of the aforementioned artists, but never with the sequence and detail that they appear in the work of Damaskenos.[10] Of course the study of staff weapons from a military-historical perspective in the East during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries is more difficult than examining the same topic in Western Europe during

7 Stauropoulou, "Εικόνες με σκηνες βιου του Αγίου Νικολάου στην Κέρκυρα: Άγνωστα έργα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνού", pp. 595-600.

8 Blair, *European Armour: circa 1066 to circa 1700*, London 1958, pp. 130-38.

9 Examples of this can also be found in works by Damaskenos such as in: Michael Damaskenos, *Saints Sergios, Bacchus and Justine*, Corfu, Antivouniotissa Museum, and, Michael Damaskenos, *Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, Athens, Municipal Gallery.

10 Noteable examples include: Theofanes the Cretan, *The Treason*, Hagio Oros, Stauroniketas Monastery, and, Nicholas Tzafoures, *Christ Bearing the Cross*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

the same period.[11] This is due to the fundamental differences in the way warfare was waged, and the different necessities of military equipment in the two regions. This is not to say that staff weapons were not used in the last years of the Eastern Empire, but that they were used with less frequency. Among the staff weapons found in eastern written sources and paintings are the bill, the glaive, and military versions of agricultural tools such as the fork.[12]

The examination of the iconography of military equipment, weapons and specifically in the case of this paper of staff weapons requires the contextualization of the forms of the examined objects. Various weapons appear in several works of Damaskenos including the halberd, the "axe-hammer" (pollaxe) and the spear. Staff weapons are a unique and complicated area of research, and their study is filled with problems, especially in one of its most basic aspects, that of their terminology. Secondary literature disagrees on the nomenclature of late medieval staff weapons, and even specialized works on the subject often lack consistency.[13] There is room in scholarship for further work on late medieval staff weapons and their geographical spread, their nomenclature, as well as new interpretations of their use.[14] As in most military-themed scenes in Byzantine and Western art, the staff weapon that is usually depicted the spear. It is, however, impossible to make any deductions from this as the simple form of the spear, and the weapon itself, had a vast geographical spread.

The weapon that most frequently occurs in the works of Michael Damaskenos is the halberd. Before examining the independent examples from his work, a brief description of the contemporary type of halberd and its technical features will be provided. The later and most recognizable form of the halberd will be referred to here as the "standard-halberd" which can be traced in iconography at least as far back as to the first quarter of the fifteenth century.

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11 Troso, *Le Armi in Asta Delle Fanterie Europee* (*1000-1500*), Novara 1988, pp. 11-12.

12 Babuin, *Τα επιθετικά όπλα των Βυζαντινών κατά την ύστερη περίοδο* (*1204-1453*), vol. 1, Ioannina 2009, pp. 131-41.

13 Monographs on staff weapons such as Troso (1988) and Waldman (2005), as well as articles such as Ash (1950), Puricelli-Guerra (1979), Borg (1974-76), and many more, have discussed in length the typology and terminology of certain staff weapons but sometimes have major differences with each other. Perhaps the most holistic and extended study is Troso's work on most staff-weapon categories, and especially bills. However, Troso does not justify the choice of many of the technical terms he uses or of some that he dismisses, and does not go into depth in examining the use of staff weapons.

14 The essay includes a brief assessment and some new suggestions on the division of staff weapon categories. The choice of terms such as "standard halberd" and axe-hammer" is discussed further. Watts/Tzouriadis, "Les armes d'hast médiévales: maniement et typologie", p. 85.

The 'standard' characterization is in contrast to the 'prototype' and 'composite' types of halberd, which can be dated earlier. The 'standard' type of weapon has a solid metal head. On the one side of the weapon's head exists a rectangular or trapezoid blade and a spike rises vertically on the axis of the shaft. The length of the vertical spike seems to vary greatly in surviving examples of this type of halberd. On the opposite side of the blade there is a horizontal spike, usually angled downwards, which is called a 'beak'. All three features of the weapon can have a variety of shapes and decorations which are primarily aesthetic. The head of the weapon is attached to the staff with a socket, a metal piece that engulfed the top of the shaft completely, and around which the technical features of this type of halberd developed. The technical characteristic appearing in standard-halberds from the second half of the fifteenth century is that the beak did not simply spring from the back of the weapon, but instead was the elongation of a plate, parallel to the blade, that grew from the base of the socket. This feature is called a 'flange' and it is sometimes sharpened to form a blade underneath the beak. The "standard halberd" was used with greater frequency throughout the last quarter of the fifteenth century, and especially in the first half of the sixteenth century. It fell out of use due to the rise and dominance of portable firearms and from then staff weapons such as halberds became heavily ornate processional and decorative objects. These changes in the form of the "standard halberd" can be observed from the second quarter of the sixteenth century. The changes can complicate the study, observation, and identification of this weapon because as its features became less prominent, they tend to resemble characteristics of other weapons. The solid trapezoid or rectangular blade of the halberd becomes concave, thinner and heavily decorated. By the end of the sixteenth century the halberd's head is slender and delicate, concave, and usually with designs created by cutting or hitting pieces of metal off the blade.

Different examples of halberds can be observed in works of Damaskenos such as *The Adoration of the Magi*, *The Beheading of Saint Paraskevi*, *The Martyrdom of Saint Andrew*, and four versions of *The Life of Saint Nicholas*.[15] There is little consistency in Damaskenos' representation of the halberd because they vary in shape and size. In *The Adoration of the Magi,* there are two nearly identical halberds illustrated.[16] They have a long spike on the vertical axis of the head and a shorter sharp horizontal spike on the back of the weapon.

15 The precise dating of Damaskenos' paintings is one of the greatest problems in the study of his work, and it a subject of constant discussion in scholarship.

16 Michael Damaskenos, *The Adoration of the Magi*, Herakleion, Collection of the Monastery of Saint Catherine of the Sinaites.

The blade on the front of the weapon's head is concave in the shape of a crescent and the blade itself is rather thin. The head is attached to the shaft with a riveted socket. This form resembles later examples of "standard halberds", which were used as we have seen, for processional or decorative purposes.

In the *Beheading of Saint Paraskevi* a different form of a halberd is depicted, which is closer to the form of the "standard halberd".[17] The head of the weapon has a vertical spike and a trapezoid blade. On the rear of the weapon's head is a smaller horizontal spike which is barely visible because of damage to the painting. The compressed back part of the blade attached to the shaft is a feature that became more popular after the second quarter of the sixteenth century, and it is a result of halberds used outside the battlefield, as the part of the weapon that would absorb the impact on the vertical axis becomes weaker. Similar weapons can be found in *The Martyrdom of St. Andrew*, held by the saint's captors.[18] The weapons appear to be a fusion of the late forms of the "standard halberd" and the "axe-hammer" (or pollaxe), which is reflected on the slightly convex blade on the right and the spikes protruding from the rear of the weapon alongside the horizontal spike. Thus this painting shows that the form of the halberd transformed progressively into being a nearly hybrid weapon, incorporating as it does elements from other staff weapon categories.[19]

The four nearly identical versions of *The Life of Saint Nicholas* include the most examples of staff weapons in the work of Damaskenos distributed in different smaller scenes which frame the saint's portrait.[20] These works by Damaskenos were only recently identified and published.[21] In fact the works mentioned here include four different icons all of which follow the same thematic and artistic expression, division in subsequent scenes, as well as positioning and form of weapons within the independent scenes from the life of the saint. Notwithstanding the restoration and repainting of some parts of the original works, Damaskenos' depiction of the weapons has remained the same. Three staff weapons are always depicted in the scene of Constantine the Great presenting his three generals with gifts. The form of the weapons indicate that they are "standard halberds", with the addition of the fine concave and heavily

17 Michael Damaskenos, *The Beheading of Saint Paraskevi*, Athens, Paulos and Alexandra Kanellopoulos Foundation.

18 Michael Damaskenos, *The Martyrdom of Saint Andrew*, Athens, Byzantine Museum.

19 Troso, *Le Armi in Asta Delle Fanterie Europee* (*1000-1500*), Novara 1988, pp. 117-19.

20 Michael Damaskenos, *The Life of Saint Nicholas*, Corfu, Temple of Saint Nicholas of Geronton.

21 Stauropoulou, "Εικόνες με σκηνες βιου του Αγίου Νικολάου στην Κέρκυρα: Άγνωστα έργα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνού", pp. 593-605.

decorated forms that appeared after the second half of the sixteenth century. The most characteristic example of the problem of recognizing and categorizing weapons in this category is the weapon depicted on the upper left corner of the illustration, which has a flange, and a spike, but at the same time the main feature of the weapon is a curved non-trapezoid axe-blade, which bears resemblance to earlier examples of "axe-hammers" (pollaxes), in a similar manner to the weapons discussed earlier in *The Martyrdom of St. Andrew*. More staff weapons can be found in the scene depicting Saint Nicholas saving the three innocents. Spears can be seen held by soldiers and a typical example of a sixteenth century "standard halberd".

In conclusion, through the works that have been briefly examined, it can be observed that Damaskenos depicted staff weapons in a variety of forms from the same or adjacent weapon categories. One of the points of cultural fusion between Western and Byzantine art is the depiction of the lean shaft of the weapon, combined with composite and complex heads of staff weapons. The thickness and the length of the shaft of staff weapons is extremely difficult to study and define, because most surviving examples use shafts that have been refitted to them and they are not contemporary to the head. Western iconography from this period usually illustrates staff-weapon shafts in a realistic manner, thick, and sometimes with metal or leather guards close to the grip. In Byzantine art staff-weapon shafts, in the majority spears, are depicted slender, made with long brush strokes, and lacking in detail. So it is interesting that Damaskenos chose to incorporate in his work elements so distinctively different from the two traditions, merging them together into a unique mix.

The coexistence of both practical and decorative forms of the halberd in the works of Damaskenos reveals his extensive knowledge of the object and an awareness of its variety. The fact that the halberd in different forms is the weapon that he chose to depict with the greatest frequency is extremely interesting as no reference to halberds are made in narratives or iconography of the late Byzantine or early post-Byzantine tradition.[22] It is Damaskenos' depiction of the halberd which most clearly demonstrates that Western influences pervade his work. This choice is connected to adopting and adapting to different forms and style, and also in illustrating natural objects that were previously absent in the eastern tradition. The staff weapons he represents are similar to those that were used in Central and Western Europe as either weapons of war or decorative objects. In that sense it is also significant that he studied and

22 Babuin, *Τα επιθετικά όπλα των Βυζαντινών κατά την ύστερη περίοδο (1204-1453)*, vol. 1, Ioannina 2009, p. 140.

used earlier mannerist elements and works of art, but he chose to imitate less 'classic' forms of weapons and used contemporary examples.

The western influences in Damaskenos' work were likely a result of his background. Born and educated in territory that was under Venetian control, he also worked in the city of Venice for several years. Before reaching Venice, he stopped and worked at Corfu, and he did the same when he returned to Crete. The already discussed iconographic examples of *The Life of Saint Nicholas* and the western influences they reflect are extensively discussed by Stauropoulou, who identified such elements as a potential method of tracking and dating the painter's travels and paintings.[23] Of course western and eastern, and especially Byzantine and Venetian, artistic traditions communicated and exchanged elements regularly in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Many artists, Damaskenos included, travelled in the Mediterranean, working in different cultural environments, and in that way helped in the transmission of different artistic traditions and their techniques. Damaskenos is an example of the transmission of artistic styles between East and West. He is an artist who balanced different artistic realities, and through practice and research explored and expanded his repertoire. In Venice Damaskenos not only worked as a painter, but he also collected sketches and reproductions of works of important contemporary Italian artists such as Parmigianino.[24] Additionally, considering that establishments in Venice, such as the Doge's Palace, already had on display numerous heavily decorated staff weapons in the late sixteenth century, it is unsurprising that he was inspired by the objects he saw in his new Venetian environment.[25] It is also worth mentioning that artists that worked with their workshops at the same time in Venice such as Lorenzo Lotto, Antonio Vassilacchi, and Paolo Veronese, also depicted staff weapons with great variety and detail, often using the same simple iconographical weapon forms as Damaskenos.[26] If Venetian art in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was

23 Stauropoulou, "Εικόνες με σκηνες βιου του Αγίου Νικολάου στην Κέρκυρα: Άγνωστα έργα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνού", pp. 593-95.

24 Konstantoudake-Kitromelidou, "Ο Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνός ως συλλέκτης σχεδίων Ιταλών καλλιτεχνών", Αντίφωνον. Αφιέρωμα στον καθηγητή Ν. Β. Δρανδάκη, Thessaloniki 1994, pp. 486-495.

25 Puricelli-Guerra, "The Glaive and the Bill", pp. 6-7.

26 An example of the use of weapon forms similar to Damaskenos, but at the same time high detail and realism in a more western fashion is the *Conquest of Tyre* (1590) by Antonio Vassilacchi. Complicated staff-weapon shapes create the background in a painting of unique realism. The face and hand expressions of the characters depicted are a great example of the Venetian style of this period. Antonio Vassilacchi, *Conquest of Tyre*, Venice, Doge's Palace.

deeply influenced and linked to the earlier Byzantine tradition, the work of artists such as Damaskenos shows how the opposite occurred in the sixteenth century.

Damaskenos' perception and depiction of military equipment was heavily influenced by the material culture to which he was exposed during his life in Venice and Venetian controlled Crete and Corfu. These influences caused him to deviate from traditional artistic norms and concepts by trying new conceptual paths. He renewed the expression, forms, and content of Cretan art by introducing modern, Venetian, and generally Italian traits. Damaskenos' paintings echoed his Byzantine origins, but the human forms and the depiction of military elements and objects reflected his reality. He fused together eastern and western forms and concepts of staff weapons when he could, as in the case of the shafts, but he chose not to cut down too much detail which made his work have more flow and impact.

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PART 3

Strategy & Command

CHAPTER 8

The Middle Ground: The Passage of Crusade Armies to The Holy Land By Land and Sea (1096-1204)

Alan V. Murray

The crusades were wars unlike any others in the history of Christianity. Two especially significant differences marked this form of holy war from other forms of warfare in the Middle Ages. The first was the character of participation in the crusade movement. Crusades had the status of penitential pilgrimages which offered the opportunity to gain spiritual rewards, and thus often attracted large numbers of participants from beyond the traditional military classes of nobles and knights. The second difference was the sheer magnitude of the undertaking in practical terms. Crusade expeditions had to travel vast distances from their starting points in Western Europe in order to reach their geographical objective, the Holy Land, and later, Egypt, meaning that they were in transit for many months, or in some cases, years, before they could engage with their Muslim enemies. Edward Peters has drawn attention to the fact that much of the modern historiography of the crusades has concentrated on two main areas. On the one hand there is the organisation of crusades in Europe, together with everything associated with it: ideology, motivation, finance, preaching, recruitment and so on; on the other hand, there are the primarily military activities of crusaders in the Holy Land and other theatres of war. What happened in between these two complexes, he claims, has tended not to attract the attention of historians.[1] The aim of this essay is to examine the factors which influenced the choice of land or sea routes in the passage of crusade armies to the East, looking at the relative aims and practicalities of land and seaborne crusades, as well as other issues contingent upon this choice, in the hope that it might serve as a useful starting point for further research.

Soon after Pope Urban made his famous appeal for the liberation of the Holy Land from Turkish rule at the Council of Clermont in November 1095, several seaborne expeditions were evidently being planned, but the majority of the forces that took part in the First Crusade (1096-99) and the expeditions which followed it in 1101 travelled by land routes. The smaller naval expeditions

1 Peters, "There and Back Again: Crusaders in Motion, 1096-1291", pp. 157-58.

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in the First Crusade and those that followed in the course of the next forty years tended to come from two regions with strong maritime traditions and capabilities: the northern Italian city-states of Genoa, Venice and Pisa, and the North Sea region of Norway, Denmark, Saxony, Frisia, Flanders and England.[2] The clear preference for larger forces from the European mainland was to travel by land routes, as in the Second Crusade (1147-49), when the main German and French expeditions led by Conrad III and Louis VII travelled overland, while a single combined Anglo-Norman, German and Flemish fleet sailed via the Iberian Peninsula to the Holy Land. However, a major change occurred at the time of the Third Crusade (1189-92). The departure of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa from Regensburg in May 1189 was the last occasion that a land route was taken by a major crusade expedition for another two centuries. The following year both Richard I of England and Philip II Augustus of France chose to sail to the Holy Land, with the necessary shipping being either constructed or hired specially for the occasion, while Barbarossa's son Henry VI appears to have considered only a sea passage for the crusade that he launched in 1197, but did not take part in himself.[3]

Land Passages

The diverse armies which made up the First Crusade took three distinct overland routes to Constantinople. The forces from northern and central France and Flanders, under Hugh, count of Vermandois, Stephen, count of Blois, Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, and Robert II, count of Flanders, all followed a route through France and the Italian peninsula to Apulia. From the ports of Brindisi or Bari they sailed across the Adriatic Sea to the Byzantine port of Dyrrachion (mod. Durrës, Albania), and then marched through the Balkans to the Byzantine capital along the ancient road known as the *Via Egnatia*.[4] Since Roman times there had been a relatively good network of roads in France and Italy, and the city of Rome with its huge number of shrine

2 For seaborne expeditions between 1101 and the Second Crusade, see especially: Doxey, "Norwegian Crusaders and the Balearic Islands" (on the crusade of King Sigurd Jorsalfar of Norway); Riley-Smith, "The Venetian Crusade of 1122-1124"; Queller and Katele, "Venice and the Conquest of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem".

3 Naumann, *Der Kreuzzug Kaiser Heinrichs VI*.

4 Murray, "Roads, Bridges and Shipping in the Passage of Crusade Armies by Overland Routes to the Bosporus; Pryor, "Modelling Bohemond's March to Thessalonike", pp. 1-24. On the Via Egnatia, see Belke, "Roads and Travel in Macedonia and Thrace in the Middle and Late Byzantine Period", pp. 74-79.

churches was an attractive staging point on the journeys of crusaders, who regarded themselves as pilgrims. However, this route involved a crossing of the Alps, which restricted the use of wheeled vehicles, and thus the amount of equipment and supplies that armies could carry. The Normans of southern Italy had experience of campaigns against Byzantine territory, and so the Adriatic crossing was the obvious route for the followers of Bohemund, especially since he could presumably organise shipping locally on favourable terms.[5] Hiring ships may well have been more expensive for the northern French, whose longer journey meant that they already had a considerable outlay for victuals and other expenses before they reached Apulia. The Adriatic crossing was also potentially dangerous. In 1097 a ship from the army of Robert Curthose and Stephen of Blois capsized, resulting in the loss of some 400 men and many animals and treasure chests.[6] Hugh of Vermandois was shipwrecked and cast ashore on Byzantine territory, having lost most of his baggage; one wonders whether his relatively passive role on the crusade may have been caused by a loss of equipment and funds that restricted his ability to reward his followers adequately.[7]

The route through Italy and across the Adriatic would also have been an obvious one for the army of Raymond of Saint-Gilles, count of Toulouse and marquis of Provence, which left in December 1096. However, instead of travelling south down the peninsula, Raymond and his followers marched due east through Lombardy and then turned south-east to traverse the rocky, inhospitable coast of Dalmatia until they eventually joined a reasonably well-maintained road system after reaching the Byzantine frontier. As is detailed in the account of the priest Raymond of Aguilers, they suffered considerable privation and delay, not least due to the hostility of the local population.[8] No satisfactory explanation has yet been advanced why the count of Saint-Gilles chose such an unfamiliar and difficult route on which his forces suffered so much, rather than taking the better known and undoubtedly easier passage down the peninsula to the Apulian ports. John France makes the suggestion that Raymond did not travel to Bari because December was an unfavourable time for sea crossings, adding that a "sea passage for such a large army would have been costly and ships might not have been available".[9] One wonders, however, why Raymond

5 Theotokis, *The Norman Campaigns in the Balkans*.

6 *Fulcheri Carnotensis Historia Hierosolymitana*, pp. 168-71.

7 Anne Comnène, *Alexiade*, 2: 213-15.

8 "Raymundi de Aguilers canonici Podiensis Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem"; Ilieva and Delev, "Sclavonia and Beyond".

9 France, *Victory in the East*, pp. 104-5.

departed so late; most of the other armies had left before this time, and it is possible that his departure had been delayed by difficulties in organising his diverse followers. Raymond's forces were recruited from the widest area of any of the armies of the princes: Provence, Languedoc, Auvergne, Septimania and Catalonia; alongside the households and military retinues of lords and bishops it also contained numerous poorer pilgrims drawn from the non-military classes of the Occitan-speaking south, which was, after all, the region which was first affected by Pope Urban's crusade preaching. Once his army was on the march, Raymond must have soon gained a clear impression of the numbers involved and realised that many of the poor were unlikely to have had the financial means to pay their passage across the Adriatic, which would mean that he ran the risk of having to subsidize them from his own funds. Certainly Raymond seems to have carefully husbanded his financial resources at least as far as Syria, and a need to avoid drastically depleting them would explain why he crossed the north Italian plain and then followed the shortest land route to Byzantine territory, thus avoiding any sea crossings.[10]

By contrast, the various popular expeditions of 1096 as well as the army of Godfrey of Bouillon, duke of Lower Lotharingia, took routes that led from the Rhineland eastwards to Regensburg, and then followed the course of the Danube via Passau, Vienna and Buda to reach the Byzantine frontier close to present-day Belgrade, and turned south through the Balkans to Constantinople.[11] We find a similar division of travel routes during the so-called Crusade of 1101. Armies from northern and central France under William II, count of Nevers, and Stephen, count of Burgundy, marched south of the Alps through Italy and sailed across the Adriatic. A Lombard army travelled east to reach the Danube in Hungary, as did a force from southern France under William IX, duke of Aquitaine, which then joined with a German army coming from southern Bavaria.[12] The precise routes of these three latter forces have not been established with certainty, although it is noticeable that they avoided the Dalmatian coast which had caused the southern French such difficulties in 1097; it is likely that after crossing the plains of Lombardy and Veneto they moved north-east

10 On the march between northern Syria and Palestine Raymond offered to pay several of the other princes and their own retinues if they accepted his leadership, which suggests that he had been able to conserve and possibly even increase his funds up to this point. See Murray, "Money and Logistics in the Armies of the First Crusade".

11 Hagenmeyer, *Le Vrai et le faux sur Pierre l'Hermite*; Murray, "The Army of Godfrey of Bouillon, 1096-1099".

12 Mulinder, "The Crusading Expeditions of 1101-2".

through the Ljubljana gap in Carniola and thence along the River Drava to reach the Danube near present-day Osijek in Croatia.[13]

After 1101 the Danube route proved to be the most popular way to Constantinople, being taken by both land armies in the Second Crusade as well as by the force of Frederick Barbarossa during the Third. For crusaders coming from Germany or northern France, it had two great advantages. Firstly, there were large centres of population situated at fairly regular intervals: Metz, Worms, Regensburg, Passau, Vienna and Buda, which functioned as markets and distribution centres. As the chronicler Odo of Deuil observed, this infrastructure meant that agricultural produce could be channelled efficiently to the large numbers of hungry mouths produced by the sudden arrival of crusade armies.[14] After the completion of a fine new bridge over the Danube shortly before the passage of the Second Crusade, the city of Regensburg became an ideal point for crusaders coming from the north to cross to the southern bank of the river and join others coming from the west and south.[15] Secondly, the navigability of the Danube eastwards from Regensburg enabled armies to place a considerable proportion of their baggage on boats or rafts, which could thus be conveyed downriver as far as the Byzantine frontier. As far as armies could follow the Danube they also generally found usable roads on the southern bank, but the situation changed drastically at the point where they had to leave the river. At Belgrade the Byzantine *Via Militaris* led along the southern bank of the Danube to the fortress city of Braničevo or Brandeiz (mod. Kostolac, Serbia), some 60 km to the east, then turned south to cross the Balkans via Niš, Sardika (mod. Sofia, Bulgaria), Philippopolis (mod. Plovdiv, Bulgaria) and Adrianople (mod. Edirne, Turkey) to Constantinople. In the later twelfth century much of the frontier zone was disputed between Byzantines, Serbs and Bulgarians, and suffered from the effects of raiding and border warfare. In the "Bulgarian Forest", as this region came to be known to crusaders, roads were of poor quality and sometimes impassible. Food supplies were difficult to obtain, and foragers and stragglers were vulnerable to attack by bandits.[16]

13 For the passage of armies through Carniola, see Kosi, "The Age of the Crusades in the South-East of the Empire (between the Alps and the Adriatic)".

14 Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, p. 30.

15 Feistner (ed.), *Die Steinerne Brücke in Regensburg*.

16 Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa im Orient*, pp. 59-67; Csendes, *Die Straßen Niederösterreichs im Früh- und Hochmittelalter*; Pascher, *Römische Siedlungen und Straßen im Limesgebiet zwischen Enns und Leitha*; Koytcheva, "Travelling of the First Crusaders across the Byzantine Balkans"; Koytcheva, "Civitates et Castra on Via Militaris and Via Egnatia"; Belke,

After arriving at Constantinople, crusade armies were dependent on the Byzantine authorities for the assistance required to cross to the Asian shore. The Byzantine emperors were generally nervous about allowing large numbers of armed Westerners, many of whom despised the Greeks, to remain close to their capital, and so they were usually keen to make ships available. One notable exception occurred in 1189-90, when relations between Frederick Barbarossa and Emperor Isaac Angelos broke down completely and the German crusaders spent most of the winter in violent occupation of eastern Macedonia and Thrace. During this time Barbarossa seriously considered hiring ships from Venice, Genoa and Ancona to transport the German army to Asia, even though this would have constituted a major additional expense. It was only after Isaac came to terms and agreed to the treaty of Adrianople in February 1190 that the Byzantines agreed to provide ships which conveyed the Germans over the Hellespont.[17]

The character of the journey changed drastically once armies landed on the Asian shore. In 1096 the Byzantines held only a few strongpoints in Bithynia, but the armies of the First Crusade restored a considerable amount of territory in western Anatolia to Byzantine rule. Nevertheless, the Christian-Muslim frontier shifted considerably in the course of the twelfth century. This meant that after crossing into Asia, most crusade armies soon left secure Byzantine territory and entered a disputed frontier zone in which isolated Byzantine settlements co-existed with nomadic Türkmen tribes who occupied most of the surrounding countryside. Beyond this zone were the Seljuk sultanate of Rūm and the Danishmendid emirate, whose Turkish rulers could deploy mobile armies of professional horse archers as well as numerous Türkmen auxiliaries. During this part of the march crusade armies were not only regularly harassed and attacked by these forces, but suffered privation as a result of the lack of food and water.[18] The roads in Asia Minor were extremely poor or non-existent, and wheeled vehicles could not be used because of the gradients or steps that characterised the main routes.[19]

The question of supply was obviously crucial to the success or failure of crusades and consequently has received considerable attention. Because the greatest part of the march took crusades through Christian, and thus friendly territory, they were reliant on obtaining the bulk of their provisions by foraging

"Roads and Travel in Macedonia and Thrace in the Middle and Late Byzantine Period"; Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, pp. 124-35, 281-83.

17 "Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris", pp. 40-43, 60-66.

18 Bachrach, "Crusader Logistics"; France, "Logistics and the Second Crusade"; Roche, "Conrad III and the Second Crusade".

19 Haldon, "Roads and Communications in the Byzantine Empire".

or purchase en route. Recent studies have confirmed the different character of sections of the route in this respect. There were often difficulties in persuading the local population to come forward to offer goods in markets, and also in agreeing on fair prices and measures, but in general the march as far as the Hungarian-Byzantine frontier proceeded smoothly (with the exception of the passage of the unruly 'popular' expeditions of the First Crusade), with sufficient provisions available. However, thereafter the supply situation was generally difficult until forces reached Constantinople and its hinterland, while, as we have seen, Asia Minor presented the greatest difficulties in obtaining sufficient food and water.[20] Armies had no choice but to carry large sums of money in order to buy supplies in friendly territory, and considerable detail about the coinage and bullion carried has been established from investigation of hoards discovered along the march routes. One especially illuminating find is the so-called 'Barbarossa Hoard' from south-eastern Turkey, which contained over 7000 coins (mostly silver pennies), ingots of silver and plundered jewellery, and probably represents the funds of a group of German crusaders in the Third Crusade. Since there were no higher denominations in circulation in Western Europe other than silver pennies until the end of the twelfth century, armies may have taken hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of coins with them, as well as silver or gold ingots and precious objects. This essential financial provision must have made up a considerable proportion of the weight carried by pack animals or vehicles. However, some crusaders, particularly leaders, were able to augment their funds en route through plundering and tribute. Frederick Barbarossa especially was able to amass large sums of money from payments extorted from the Byzantine emperor and booty from the capture of the Seljuk capital of Ikonion (mod. Konya, Turkey).[21]

Sea Passages

For a long time the course and character of seaborne crusades were almost completely neglected, but we owe many advances over the last twenty-five years to a small band of scholars, notably John France, Thomas F. Madden and

20 Murray, "Money and Logistics in the Armies of the First Crusade"; Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa"; Bachrach, "Crusader Logistics"; Haldon, "Roads and Communications in the Byzantine Empire".

21 Wielandt, "Münzfund aus Thrakien zur Kreuzzugszeit"; Grierson, "A German Crusader's Hoard of 1147 from Side (Turkey)"; Hendy, "The Gornoslav Hoard, the Emperor Frederick I, and the Monastery of Bachkovo"; Stumpf, *Der Kreuzzug Kaiser Barbarossas*; Hiestand, "Die Kriegskasse des Kaisers?"; Murray, "Zum Transfer von Zahlungsmitteln bei Kreuzzugsexpeditionen"; Murray, "Barschaft und Beute".

above all, John Pryor.[22] One of the significant problems, as Pryor points out, is that the great majority of narrative sources had a very poor understanding of maritime matters, with some exceptions such as the Genoese chronicler Caffaro, who actually sailed to the Holy Land with a naval force from his home town in 1100. Despite such difficulties, recent research has clarified many issues: the routes taken and the problems of navigation according to prevailing winds; developments in ship types and their construction; the provisioning of fleets and the crusaders transported by them; the use of fleets to supply land crusades and provide communications; the transport of horses by sea; and the contribution of naval personnel to warfare on land.[23]

As we have seen, in the course of the twelfth century there was a gradual trend for passages by land increasingly to give way to passages by sea. However, the debate about the two different forms of route has recently been reopened by Bernard Bachrach in an essay that also has wider implications for our understanding of the original aims of the crusade movement as conceived by Urban II. He asks: "if the recapture of Jerusalem were Pope Urban's primary war aim, why did he send the army to Constantinople?". This is a question that has hardly been discussed by historians, but it is one which deserves close consideration. Bachrach sets out an "option not chosen" by the pope: rather than having crusade contingents travel overland to Jerusalem via Constantinople, he argues, it would have been perfectly feasible to mobilise an army amounting to around 15,000-20,000 men at various ports in Italy, southern France, and eastern Spain, which could then have been transported, together with their horses and equipment, to the port of Jaffa in southern Palestine. From here, and supplied by sea, the army could march the relatively short distance to Jerusalem and besiege the Holy City. The fact that Urban and his advisers rejected this option is interpreted by Bachrach as a clear indication that the pope's primary war aim was thus not to capture Jerusalem, but to provide mili-

22 Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*; Pryor, "Transportation of Horses by Sea during the Era of the Crusades"; Pryor, "From Dromon to Galea"; Pryor, "The Naval Architecture of Crusader Transport Ships and Horse Transports Revisited"; Pryor, "Water, Water Everywhere, Nor Any Drop to Drink"; Pryor, "The Venetian Fleet for the Fourth Crusade and the Diversion of the Crusade to Constantinople"; Pryor, "A View from a Masthead"; France, "The First Crusade as a Naval Enterprise"; France, "The Western Mediterranean Powers and the First Crusade"; Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*; Madden, "Food and the Fourth Crusade"; Bachrach, "Some Observations on the Role of the Byzantine Navy in the Success of the First Crusade"; Gertwagen, "Harbours and Facilities along the Eastern Mediterranean Sea Lanes to Outremer".

23 Pryor, "A View from a Masthead", p. 92.

tary assistance to enable Byzantium to recapture territory in western Anatolia lost to the Turks.[24]

Pryor's work provides one major objection to this scenario on technological grounds. The fighting power of mailed knights mounted on warhorses was the key element in Western military tactics at this time, and the transport of horses required specially adapted shipping, as well as plentiful supplies of fodder and water and regular access to fresh air. At the time of the First Crusade, horses had recently been transported across the Adriatic Sea, across the English Channel, and from Italy to Malta and the Balearic Islands, but they had not travelled anything like the distance between Western Europe and the Levant. Pryor argues that it was only by the later twelfth century that specialised transport vessels (Fr. *uissiers*) were developed, which allowed horses to be conveyed long distances without suffering injury or sickness while at sea; such ships were undoubtedly in use during the Fourth Crusade and in subsequent naval expeditions. It is also questionable whether, even if Jerusalem could be taken, the city could possibly be held without Christian control of the areas to the north of Palestine, above all the key city of Antioch (mod. Antakya, Turkey) and its nearby ports. A crusader occupation of Jaffa and Jerusalem would have been dependent on supply from Cyprus, the nearest area of Christian control, and thus vulnerable to attack by the Fātimid navy.[25]

There are further objections to Bachrach's scenario, the first being the issue of coordination. It is difficult to see how squadrons sailing from more than half a dozen different ports several hundred kilometres apart (Barcelona, Narbonne, Marseilles, Genoa, Pisa, Amalfi, Venice, Brindisi) could have co-ordinated their voyages to arrive together at the far end of the Mediterranean Sea, given the difficulties encountered with currents and winds. The fleet of Richard the Lionheart was dispersed by storms shortly before reaching Cyprus in 1191; several vessels were wrecked or grounded, and it took considerable time and effort to regroup.[26] Of course it would not have been absolutely necessary to have squadrons sailing from so many different ports as Bachrach proposes; it would have been possible to use Byzantine Cyprus, with good harbours at Limassol and Famagusta, as the main assembly area. Yet even with a united fleet crossing from Cyprus to the Palestinian mainland it was not simply a matter of sailing into Jaffa and storming ashore. The Fātimid forces in Palestine would surely have been aware of a forthcoming invasion, and would have undoubt-

24 Bachrach, "Papal War Aims in 1096", pp. 319-44.

25 Pryor, "A View from a Masthead", pp. 125-40; Pryor, "A Medieval Mediterranean Maritime Revolution: Crusading by Sea, ca. 1096–1204".

26 *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, pp. 175-82.

edly opposed any landing. During the First Crusade, Italian fleets were only able to disembark once the port had been captured by land forces in 1099. The majority of vessels available would have been sailing ships functioning as transports, but these could not have been manoeuvered in to shore, since the sea off Jaffa contained rocks and reefs. Troops might be landed by transferring them in driblets onto small boats, but this was a highly risky undertaking in the face of an enemy; it would have also required a large number of sailors to man all the vessels. In fact, the only effective means of landing troops outside a port was by using galleys, whose oar-based propulsion afforded the necessary manoeuvrability. It was galleys that enabled the forces of the Third Crusade to disembark near Acre in northern Palestine. The port itself was held by Saladin's forces, but these were confined by Christian forces which had erected fortifications around the city.

It is questionable whether the Italian maritime powers had sufficient galleys in 1096 for the type of major amphibious operation that Bachrach proposes. Galleys were designed primarily for war, and the numbers available would be greatly outnumbered by the sailing vessels that were used for commercial purposes. We know of a Genoese fleet including 12 galleys that sailed in July 1097 and another with 26 galleys in 1100.[27] The fact that they left at such a considerable time after the council of Clermont, and about a year after the land armies, suggests that the galleys may have been specially constructed for a campaign in the East, an operation which took some time. There is no clear agreement whether these expeditions were undertaken as private enterprise, on the initiative of the Genoese state, or a combination of both, but the progress made by the crusade by the time they set off is an indication that they hoped to gain trading concessions and possibly territory that would justify their costs.

This consideration brings us to a final objection to Bachrach's "option not chosen". An amphibious attack on Jaffa carrying the numbers projected by him would have required a greater number of galleys than were actually sent east in the entire period 1097-1100. This is additional evidence which suggests that the construction of the requisite number of vessels, plus payment and supplies for their crews for the duration of the campaign, would have required considerable financial outlay. Genoa and Venice may well have been prepared to make this sacrifice in exchange for commercial concessions; this was, after all the prevailing pattern of the Italian republics' involvement in the crusades throughout the twelfth century. However, what of the crusaders who would be expected to undertake all of the fighting? Troops travelling by land had

27 Pryor, "A View from a Masthead", pp. 92-93; France, "The First Crusade as a Naval Enterprise", pp. 389-90.

considerable outlays for food, but they could also resort to foraging (especially to secure green fodder for horses) or plundering if necessary. By contrast, for individual crusaders the costs of sea voyages were all up front. Before they could travel they needed sufficient funds to pay for their passage as well as their provisions for the entire voyage. Even horses represented an additional expense at sea. On land, they could generally graze free on grass; on ship, bought-in fodder was required every day.

The proof of this argument can be seen in events over a century later, when conditions for a naval expedition were actually far more favourable. From 1198 preaching and recruitment were under way for a new crusade, which was intended to be directed against Egypt, the main seat of Fātimid power, rather than Jerusalem. By this time crusading taxation was well established and functioned reasonably well.[28] A considerable amount of money was collected by the church, although it is uncertain how much filtered down to individual crusaders. The crusade leaders only seem to have considered a sea passage, and their plenipotentiaries started negotiations with the republic of Venice to secure the necessary transport. At the conclusion of the talks, the Venetians agreed to provide transport and provisions for an army of 33,500 men and 4500 horses at a cost of 2 marks per man and 4 marks per horses, amounting to a total of 85,000 marks of the standard of Cologne. However, recent research has emphasised how much of a financial contribution was made by the Venetian republic itself, which had 50 galleys constructed at its own expense and agreed to supply ships and crews who might otherwise have been deployed in more lucrative commercial activities for the duration of the campaign. So a large proportion of the up-front costs was borne by Venice rather than the other crusaders. The subsequent course of the crusade is well known. When the army assembled at Venice, far fewer than the projected number of crusaders were found to be present; many had taken other routes or simply failed to leave. Even after two voluntary collections, the total sum raised was only 51,000 marks, leaving 34,000 marks still owing to the Venetians. The need to pay off this debt started a chain of events that led to the ultimate diversion of the crusade to Constantinople.[29]

28 Cazel, "Financing the Crusades"; Constable, "The Financing of the Crusades in the Twelfth Century".

29 Queller and Day, "Some Arguments in Defense of the Venetians on the Fourth Crusade"; Queller and Madden, "Some Further Arguments in Defense of the Venetians on the Fourth Crusade"; Madden, "Vows and Contracts in the Fourth Crusade"; Madden, "Food and the Fourth Crusade"; Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*.

In 1096 there was no mechanism in place for taxation that could have paid for the construction of galleys, hired their crews and augmented the funds of poorer crusaders. The effects of the Investiture Contest meant that much of Germany and northern Italy refused to acknowledge the authority of Pope Urban II, and without the co-operation of any of the Western monarchies, it is scarcely thinkable that the papacy could have organised the finance necessary to pay in advance for a large-scale amphibious operation against Palestine. No land passage ever suffered from such financial problems as bedevilled and ultimately subverted the crusade of 1201-4. The option not chosen in 1096 was not chosen for very good reasons.

The Fourth Crusade marked a fundamental change in the aims and logistics of crusading in that its intended goal was no longer the Holy Land, but Egypt. The advance of the Seljuks of Rūm and other Turkish emirates and the collapse of Byzantine power in Asia Minor pushed back the Christian-Muslim frontier and extended the area of hostile territory that would needed to be traversed by land armies, while Saladin's conquests in 1187 brought large sections of the Syrian and Palestinian littoral under enemy control. After the failure of the Third Crusade, the Western powers recognised that the key to the liberation of Jerusalem was Egypt, the economic powerhouse that paid for Saladin's armies and fleet. An overland passage to Egypt would have added hundreds of kilometres to an already difficult journey, and so only naval expeditions were considered against Saladin and his Ayyūbid and Mamlūk successors.[30] This preference for Egypt as the key strategic objective continued up to and beyond the fall of the last Christian possessions in the Holy Land in 1291, with seaborne crusades being launched in 1217-21, 1227-29, 1239-41, 1248-54, 1267, 1269-70, 1270-72 and 1309, either to launch attacks on Egypt or to defend the diminishing Frankish territories in Palestine.[31] It was only in 1396 that a major overland campaign was again launched, when a combined force from England, France and Hungary launched an attack down the lower Danube that ended in disaster at Nicopolis.[32] By this time the geopolitical situation had changed completely, and the immediate aim of crusading was to stem the advance of the Ottoman Turks, who were now threatening the Christian kingdoms and principalities of

30 Murray, "The Place of Egypt in the Military Strategy of the Crusades, 1099-1221".

31 Hiestand, "Friedrich II. und der Kreuzzug"; Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*; Lower, *The Barons' Crusade*; Bleck, "Ein oberrheinischer Palästina-Kreuzzug 1267"; Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade, 1270-1272"; Housley, "Pope Clement V and the Crusades of 1309-10".

32 On the Nicopolis campaign, see most recently Veszprémy, "Some Remarks on Recent Hungarian Historiography of the Crusade of Nicopolis (1396)".

south-eastern Europe. Pope Urban II's dream of the recovery of the Holy Land had long ceased to be a realistic possibility.

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CHAPTER 9

The Theory of the *Passagium Particulare*: A Commercial Blockade of the Mediterranean in the Early Fourteenth Century?*

Cornel Bontea

The crusading theory between the Council of Lyon (1274) and the 1330s distinguishes two approaches: the *passagium generale* and the *passagium particulare*. The latter was an operation of limited size and scope, seeking to strengthen and support the positions held by the Latins in the East. In the papal bull *Exsurgat deus* (August 11, 1308) pope Clement V defines the 1308 Hospitallers expedition's objectives as "*pontes et vias ad idem generale passagium preparando*".[1] The main goal of the *passagium particulare* was to conquer a bridgehead and from there harass the enemy and prepare a large scale invasion. The first step was a commercial blockade of the Mediterranean in order to prevent trade with the Mamluks and at the same time raid enemy shores. The *passagium generale* was a broader undertaking that required the collaboration of all Christendom and vowed to recover the Holy Land. The preparation was longer and took place according to the following scheme: the papacy required taxes to finance such a project and diplomatic preparation was needed to get the help of the sovereigns who would be interested in fighting the Sultan of Egypt. Preaching then ensued by the pope and his legates which could have lasted several years followed by the preparation of a war fleet, etc. The fall of Acre (1291) demonstrated that the Mamluks were a worthy adversary, with impressive military power and presented a serious obstacle to the recovery of the Holy Land. The strategic military thinking in the early fourteenth century favoured a minimal military confrontation during the initial phase of the campaign since the goal was to damage the enemy's economy and hence their military power. This paper examines the tactical and conceptual ideas of the crusade theorists of the early fourteenth century, concerning preliminary pas-

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1 Kedar/Schein, "Un projet de 'passage particulier'", p. 217.

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sage in the Mediterranean Sea. It will then proceed to argue that no matter how fourteenth century theorists conceptualized their actions, their approach was highly optimistic and hardly feasible considering the logistics of the era.

For the majority of the crusade theorists in the fourteenth century, the main goal was to weaken Egypt prior to undertaking a new campaign. They believed that the Westerners should exploit their naval power and take advantage of the weaknesses of the Mamluks, who were vulnerable to coastal raids due to the enormous extent of their territories. Equally, the theorists were aware of the enemy's dependence of certain vital goods and the majority of them favoured a commercial blockade of the Mediterranean Sea to prevent trade. Generally, the suggestions given by them covered the same issues: imports of wood, iron and slaves, denying the sultan revenues from tariffs collected from merchants, and the role of Christians in carrying out this trade.[2]

During this period, popes maintained an embargo on trade with all Muslims as well as with other enemies. But the total blockade in this period is more of a legal theory than a practical reality. Typically, papal licenses made the blockade selective in practice. These licenses may have undermined the embargoes' ability to inflict economic damage on their enemies. Hence papal embargoes, even if they were undermined functionally, could still serve a symbolic purpose to the papacy – they helped uphold the idea of a papally-led Christendom. The language of papal embargoes, moreover, remained concerned largely with moral issues, rather than with the effects of trade on the military strength of infidels.[3]

The most original aspect of the theory of the *passagium particulare* was the use of economic warfare against the Mamluks. After the fall of Acre, crusading needed a revitalisation and a new approach. Henceforth, to recover the Holy Land, the Westerners needed to start all over again as in the times of the First Crusade. Therefore, the authors favoured an organised naval blockade of the Mediterranean as a preliminary passage, which should also carry out military strikes on Egyptian shores.

The first theorist who advocated this idea was Fidenzio de Padoue in his treaty *Liber recuperationis Terrae Sanctae*, written before the fall of Acre.[4] Fidenzio composed his work in response to a request for advice by Pope Gregory X, made on the occasion of the Second Council of Lyon (1274). His

2 Leopold, *How to recover the Holy Land*, pp 199-126.

3 Stantchev, *Spiritual Rationality*, pp 119-133.

4 Fidenzio de Padoue, *Liber recuperationis Terrae Sanctae*, ed. Paviot, pp 53-171. On Fidenzio's treaty see Leopold, *How to Recover the Holy Land*, p. 16 and passim; Schein, *Fideles Crucis*, pp 93-102; Stanchev, *Spiritual Rationality*, pp 175-183; Evangelisti, *Fidenzio da Padova*, pp 1-169.

prolonged residence in Syria as the vicar of the Franciscan province of the Holy Land in the 1260s, his travels to the Levant, his knowledge of Arabic and his military expertise made him well informed regarding matters in the East.[5] He argued for a joint action: a commercial embargo and military strike from northern Syria. In Fidenzio's plan the role of the Mediterranean fleet was essential. One of his tasks was to prevent and intercept trade between the *malos christiani* and the Mamluks. According to Fidenzio, trade with Christians was extremely profitable for the sultan, giving him all the materials he needed for his military and civilian projects. The Westerners brought to the Muslims iron, tin, and other metals, timber, oil, honey, and other needed materials. Since Egypt had to import these goods, the embargo would seriously weaken the country. In addition to this, the transit trade between Asia and Europe would be interrupted – the trade would be deflected from the Red Sea and Egypt to Persia and Armenia – the sultan would lose the dues paid by those who brought pepper and other spices from the Far East. As a result, they would be unable to export their own goods: flax, sugar, and coloured cloth. His military power would further decline, because he would no longer be able to import slaves for his army from the Black Sea region.[6] Another task of the fleet was to launch attacks on the Egyptian shorelines and maritime possessions. Therefore, the sultan, fearing an attack from the sea, would not be able to deploy all his forces against the Holy Land. The fleet should consist of forty or fifty galleys, but no less than thirty, all well equipped with men and war materials.[7] The naval bases were to be Cyprus, Acre, Rouad, Rhodos.[8]

Ramon Lull, a Franciscan philosopher from Majorca, argued for a similar approach.[9] He finished his work *Tractatus de modo convertendi infidelis* (1292) in Rome shortly after the fall of Acre, in response to Pope Nicholas IV's request

5 We do not know much about Fidenzio's life, but probably he was present at the fall of Antioch (1268) when he accompanied Baybars's army to assist Christian captives. Also he was in the Muslim camp after the fall of Tripoli (1289). See Paviot's introduction to *Projets de croisade*, pp 15-16.

6 Fidenzio de Padoue, *Liber recuperationis Terrae Sanctae*, ed. Paviot pp 139-143.

7 Ibid., pp 138-143 : "Et bonum esset quod essent l vel Xl vel XXX ad minus galee, bene armate et bene parate tam personis quam in omnibus hiis que sunt neccessaria ad belum".

8 Ibid., p. 144 : "Supradicte galee possunt morari circa Egiptum, quia ibi sunt quendam loca satis bona pro galeis ad standum ibidem sicut dicunt illi qui loca illa viderunt, vel possunt stare in Cipro, vel in Acon, vel in insula Anterodi, vel in Rodo, vel etiam in aliis locis. Sed puto quod melius est ut galee sint circa Egiptum ut subito possint nocere Egiptiis, et non permittant aliqua vasa pervenire in Egyptum, nec aliqua vasa inde exire permittant".

9 Ramon Lull was born in Majorca (1232-1233). He wrote numerous treaties to promote the crusade and his ultimate goal: the conversion of Muslims. Under the influence of the

for advice on how to recover the Holy Land. He suggested that Christians exploit their maritime strength and cease trade in the Mediterranean. For this purpose, he designated three admirals – one would be attached to Spain, controlling the Moroccan coastlines from Tripoli to Safi, the second would survey the Syrian coast from Tripoli to Armenia, and the third would watch over the Roman See whose jurisdictions would cover the entire region.[10] The fleet of the admirals should also launch attacks on the coastlines in order to destroy the enemy's strongholds. After the destruction of the coastline and some fortified points, the main crusader army could make the passage in to Mamluk territory. Lull is convinced that the naval blockade and the raids would destroy the opponent's military strength and would facilitate Christian victory.[11] Another of Lull's work, the *Liber de fine*, presented to James II of Aragon in 1305 deals with the preliminary passage. Lull argued that an admiral appointed by the "belator rex" should capture, with a strong ship and four armed galleys, the islands of Rhodes and Malta, furnishing excellent bases to the fleet in order to prevent trade with the Saracens.[12] The galleys should launch destructive attacks on the coastal towns and settlements of the enemy to ensure a successful landing in hostile territory. Also, the Crusaders should build a stronghold, which would be well equipped and be able to resist two thousand horsemen or even more.[13] In order to succeed, the galleys would have to carry a sizeable force of a hundred mounted knights, a hundred mounted bowmen, fifty armed

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Dominican Ramon de Penyafort he learned oriental languages to facilitate preaching. On the life of Ramon Lull, see Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull and Lulism*, pp 1-45.

10 Ramon Lull, *Tractatus de modo convertendi infideles*, ed. Sugranyes de Franch, p. 132 : "Un premier amiral, attaché à l'Espagne sera préposé à la mer depuis Tripoli en Berbérie jusqu'à Safi. Un autre étendra sa juridiction sur la mer de Syrie, de Tripoli jusqu'en Arménie. Un troisième régira la mer romaine".

11 Ibid. : "Après la destruction des côtes sarrasines et de quelques-uns de leurs bastions maritimes, les chrétiens pourront effectuer par mer le passage. Les ennemis se verront dans l'impossibilité de leur résister, vu la perte de leurs côtes et les dommages subis pour longtemps".

12 Ramon Lull, *Liber de fine*, ed. Madre, p. 281: "Vlterius dominus almirallus unam nauem habeat ualde magnam et galeas quattor seu taridas bene munitas seu paratas, et capiat unam insulam, quae uocatur Rodes. In qua est bonus portus sicut uidi; et etiam aliam, quae dicitur esse Malta".

13 Ibid., Madre, p. 280 : "Et sic possent destruere circa mare omnia blada, uillas et castra, bona et animalia, et capere Saracenos".

men with crossbows and a thousand foot soldiers.[14] Weakened, Egypt would easily capitulate to the Crusaders within six years.[15]

Charles II of Anjou, as well, responded to Nicholas IV's call. He had a personal interest in the kingdom of Jerusalem. His father made a claim to the crown and he had not renounced it. He asserted that a general passage against Egypt would be a mistake.[16] The landing of the Crusaders in Egypt would be prevented without difficulty and the climatic conditions of the East would reduce the fighting capacity of the army. He argued for strategic attacks and the destruction of Alexandria carried out by a fleet of a hundred ships, fifty galleys and fifty transport ships able to carry 1 500 soldiers and horses. The fleet would impose a commercial blockade on the Egyptian trade and would raid the coastline – small contingents would land in enemy territory destroying and sacking everything in their way.[17]

Foulques de Villaret, the grand master of the Hospital, had a long experience of campaigning in the Levant and was well placed to advise on strategical military measures.[18] He discussed the naval strategy and the military tactics prior to the crusade in two treaties written between 1306 and 1308 as a response to Clement V's request. In the first project, *Informatio et instructio super faciendo generali passagio pro recuperatione Terre Sanctae* (1306), the Grand Master

14 Ibid., p. 281 : "Et in aestate in galeis ducant equos, qui in terram exeant, sicut uidebintur eis expedire – quoniam centum milites cum equis bene munitis et centum ballistarii equitantes et quingenti pedites cum ballistis duorum peduum, habens quilibet coram se unam targuam cum quodam foramine, per quod ualeat sagittare; quae targua sit fulta in quodam baculo bene fixo, habente duorum palmorum alium transuersalem, et mille pedites cum clipeis, lanceis atque telis per modum ordinatum in terram Saracenorum exire poteruntmultum bene, et castra aedificare et munire contra duo milia uel plures equites praedictorum, et per unam leucam uel per duas terram unanimiter introir, et iacere per unam noctem, uelint aut nolint Saraceni".

15 Ibid. : "Et sic terra aegyptica et babylonica esset afflicta taliter a sex annis, quod per christianos faciliter posset capi".

16 Charles II of Anjou, *Conseil du roi Charles*, ed. Bratianu, p. 353.

17 Ibid.,, p. 355: "(…) et a destruire la marine et gaster le port d'Aleixandre dont mout de bien uient au sudan et a garder que nous apros de la crestiente ne puise uenir en le paenisme consile le dis roys que la glyese de Rome ordenast de maintenant que cinquante galies et cinquante huissiers fusent mis en mer appareillies de portes cheuaus et gens darmes".

18 Foulques de Villaret was the 25th Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaller, succeeding his uncle Guillaume de Villaret in 1305. Foulques had benefited from his uncle's position, becoming Admiral of the Hospital in 1299, Grand Commander in 1301 and Lieutenant of the Master in 1303. In 1306 he launched the Hospitaller invasion of Rhodes. Due to financial reasons he was removed from his duties in 1319 and died in 1327. See Demurger, *Les Hospitaliers*, pp 465-480; Luttrell, "Notes on Foulques de Villaret", pp 73-90.

argued for a three stage crusade: a naval blockade in the Mediterranean by the Hospitaller, Templar and Cypriot fleet, the *passagium particulare* and a general crusade. He recommended a prolonged war of attrition which would weaken the enemy enough so that a small force could easily conquer Egypt. He argued for a maritime blockade: to intercept illegal trade carried out by twenty five galleys who were in turn armed by the two military orders and Cyprus.[19] He assigned only one role to the fleet – the interception of trade – an innovation compared to previous treaties, suggesting that economic warfare was an important constituent in his crusading plan. The preliminary passage should precede the general crusade, so Foulques suggested that a larger fleet of fifty to sixty galleys – half of these ships should be huissier galleys able to transport forty to fifty horses – should raid and destroy, throughout one year, the enemy's coastline.[20] In the second treatise, *Comment la Terre sainte puet estre recouvree par les Chrestiens* (1307-1308), the Grand Master favoured a two stage crusade – a general passage and a preliminary passage (he did not name the second passage) – emphasising military strategy over economic warfare.[21] He criticised the idea of a general passage giving as an example the losses of Peter the Hermit and Godfrey of Bouillon's army in the First Crusade. The sea is also dangerous, because the men and horses will be exhausted by the journey and at the time of the battle they will be easy prey for the Saracens.[22] The preliminary passage is the only way to harm the Saracens. Therefore, he recommended using a single preliminary force of sixty galleys – serving eight months a year – based in Rhodes and Cyprus, to intercept trade and at the same time attack the sultan's lands. Regular attacks on the Egyptian and Syrian coastlines for a

19 Foulques de Villaret, *Informatio*, ed. Paviot, pp 192-193 : "Et ideo opportebit quod, incipietur crux predicari, debeant ordinari et mitti ultra mare viginti quinque galee armate bonis gentibus, que cum armamento per illustrem regem Cipri, per Templum et nos faciendo, resistere poterunt vasa perversorum Christianorum bono modo Alexandriam aut terram Egipti ingredi non valebunt. Et hoc armamentum exiguum dicimus nos debere fieri ad hoc ut Saracenis se armandi et furniendi rebus predictis spatium citius auferatur".

20 Ibid., p. 193 : "Et post ordinationem xxv galearum predictarum erit expediens quod, ut citius fieri poterit, ordinentur quinquaginta vel sexaginta galee, de quibus medietas sint usserii potentes portarre quadragintos vel quinquagentos equos, quod armamentum, per totum annum unum antequam passagium veniat, ibit per rippariam terre soldani, que est plusquam quadraginta dietarum, applicando nunc uni loco nunc alio, et ponet equites et pedites in terra, cursuros et vastaturos loca vicina maritime per mediam dietam, aut plus sive minus, secundum quod esse locorum duxerit requirendum".

21 Demurger, *Les Hospitaliers*, pp 470-475; Demurger, "Les ordres militaires", pp 117-128; Schein/ Kedar, "Un projet de passage particulier", pp. 212-215.

22 Foulques de Villaret, *Comment la Terre sainte*, ed. Paviot, pp 223-227.

period of five years would destroy the sultan's fortified positions. In order to accomplish these goals, he advised the pope to raise an army of a thousand knights and four thousand crossbowmen.[23]

Another theorist who favoured a preliminary expedition was the Armenian Hayton of Gorigos. His treatise, *Flor des estoires de la terre d'orient*, was completed in 1307 as a response to Clement V's request. He was well placed to give information about the Crusade having travelled in the East. He also had good knowledge of the political context and had close dealings with the Mongols.[24] Because Hayton was preoccupied by the illegal trade, economic warfare played an important role in his crusading proposal. He argued that a fleet of ten galleys, based in Cyprus or Armenia, with a thousand knights and three thousand foot soldiers under the command of a captain and a papal legate, would impose a naval blockade on Egypt, ravage its coast and capture the island of Rouad.[25] The economic blockade would have to be reinforced on land – this is the most original advice of his plan – by a Mongol alliance which would intercept eastern trade with the Sultan's territories and would undermine his power by attacking the provinces situated on the border of the Mongol empire. He sug-

23 Foulques de Villaret, *Comment la Terre sainte*, ed. Paviot, p. 228 : "Et, se il plasoit au Saint-Siege de l'apostre d'ordoner les soldees de mil homes a cheval et iiii^{m} arbalestriers jusques a v ans continuelz et lx galeys chascun par an viii mois, et les galeys devant dites seroient comparties a Roddes et en Chippre ou temps et en saisons, selon la pourvenance du chevetain et l'ordonance du Saint Siege de l'apostre, en mainere que il porront plus grever les Sarrasinz"; Kedar/Schein, "Un projet de passage particulier", pp 212-213.

24 Hayton of Gorigos was a member of the Armenian royal family. During the fratricidal conflict for the Armenian throne in 1290, he played a leading role in the kingdom's internal affairs. With the assistance of the military orders he governed for two years between 1299 and 1301. He retired from political life in 1305 and become a monk in the abbey of Bellapais in Cyprus. He was sent as an ambassador in Europe by Amalric of Lusignan to seek papal acceptance of the coup against Henry II. He was present at the Council of Adana, in 1314, but after this period we know nothing about him. See Kohler's Introduction to *Flor des estoires de la terre d'orient*, pp XXII-XLV; Leopold, *How to recover the Holy Land*, p. 29-30.

25 Hayton, *Flor des estoires de la terre d'orient*, ed. Kohler, pp 355 : "Cujus copie quantitatem sufficientem esse judico, in presenti, mille militum, x galearum et trium milium peditum armatorum. Super his etiam legatus a Sede apostolica mitterentur, et capitaneus strennus et fidelis, qui ipsos omnes regerent et foverent. Et feliciter cum eius, dante Domino, transfretarent et juxta eorum discretionem et providenciam in insulam Cypri aut in regnum Armenie applicarent … Verumptanem modum incipiendi guerram et terras inimicorum invadendi ad presens dicere pretemitto, quoniam juxta inimicorum condicionem et statum oportebit consilium immutare, et operari consilio sapientum qui presentes ipsi negocio intererunt".

gested that the preliminary expedition (he calls it: *primo pasagium* and *parvum passagium*) should capture, with the aid of forty thousand Christian archers from Lebanon, Tripoli and defend it until the arrival of the *passagium generale.*[26]

One of the most complete theories on the preliminary passage is found in Marino Sanudo Torsello's, *Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis*, presented to Pope John XXII, in 1321.[27] He planned a three stage crusade – a naval blockade in the Mediterranean followed by the conquest of a bridgehead in enemy territory and finally, the general expedition, in which the *passagium particulare* played an important strategical role. A naval force of seven or ten galleys would patrol the sea during nine months so that nothing could be transported or removed to Egypt. Economic warfare played a leading role in Sanudo's recovery conception. He noticed that Egypt's wealth derived from its position as middlemen in the spice trade from Asia to Europe. The merchandise transited the Red Sea, from where it was exported by camel caravan to the Nile, and then was sent by boat to Alexandria and Cairo, where Western merchants bought it and shipped it to Europe.[28] After the interruption of the trade, the Venetian suggested that Westerners deal with the Mongols, transporting the goods through their territory.[29] He observed that the native Egyptians were poor soldiers and that the sultan's military forces were imported slaves. The commercial embargo would cut off the sultan's sources of wood, iron and pitch, essential to shipbuilding.[30] Sanudo advocated that a firm prohibition be established throughout the whole

26 Ibid., : pp 357 : "Sunt enim in monte Libani christiani pedites, arcarii valde boni, circa XL^{m}, qui libenter subsidium et juvanem impenderent peregrinis, qui multociens fuerunt rebelles soldano et sue genti dampna plurima intulerunt. Et postquam Tripolitana civitas esset rehedificata, Christiani possent illam defendere et tenere usque ad adventum passagii generalis et possent eciam totum comitatum Tripolis occupare, et istud cederet ad magnum comodum Christianorum passagii generalis, quia portum inveniret paratum, et ibi possent comode applicare".

27 Marino Sanudo Torsello, born around 1260 in Venise, was a member of the prominent Sanudo family, who ruled over the island of Naxos. He was well educated and well read. He also travelled in the East to gather information to document his treatise. He visited Cyprus, Alexandria, Rhodes, Armenia, Acre. He wrote the first part of his crusading treatise, *Conditiones Terrae Sanctae*, by 1307, than he extended his book, and in 1321 presented it to Pope John XXII in Avignon. He was involved in business affairs as an agent for the Sanudi's, but modern historians suggested that he was an agent of the Republic of Saint Marc. He insisted that he was not controlled by any king, prince or city, but acted of his own will. See Laiou, "Marino Sanudo", pp 374-392; Tyerman, "Marino Sanudo", pp 57-73.

28 Evelyn Edson, "Reviving the crusade", p. 135; Alfredo Cocci, "Le projet de blocus naval", pp 171-188.

29 Marino Sanudo, *Liber Secretorum*, ed. Lock, pp 51-54.

30 Stanchev, *Spiritual Rationality*, pp 17-20.

world, covering territories of the Turks in Asia Minor as well as the purchase of spices and goods from India, cotton, sugar and flax from Egypt to Granada.[31] To achieve its full effect, he introduced a new practical consideration: the prohibition should be established on land too. He argued that by only applying it to the sea, the prohibition would not be able to prevent some goods from being transported to the lands of the sultan. In the second or third year after the implementation of the embargo, a second passage should be led by a Venetian "God-fearing" (*timens Deum*) captain with fifteen thousand foot soldiers and three hundred cavalry in order to seize and set up a base on the shores of Egypt.[32] From there he would conduct several operations on the sea and the river against the enemies. After two or three years, the Pope would preach a crusade (*crux praedicari*) against Egypt who would already be weakened on land and sea. This large army would go on to conquer the Holy Land and possibly the Byzantine Empire.

Some theorists made no mention of attacks on enemy shores but still proposed the interception of trade as a preliminary measure before the *passagium generale*. In his work, *De modo Sarracenos extirpandi* composed between 1314 and 1316, William Adam argued for a rare alternative of a naval blockade.[33] He suggested a double naval embargo: first it would reinforce the established prohibitions against trading with Egypt, because the Genoese merchants sailed to and from Alexandria and provided the Egyptians with wood, arms, children and other supplies;[34] secondly, to supplement the embargo in the Mediterranean, the Christians would blockade trade on the Indian Ocean, to prevent merchants from India from coming to Egypt with goods which the "false Christians" carried to Europe.[35] He recommended that a small force of three or four galleys, equipped with 1 200 men, close the strait of Aden. With the permission of the Ilkhans, the fleet could be based in Kish and Hormuz, where the Christians could repair the galleys, winter there when no navigation on the ocean would be possible and even deposit the confiscated goods from

31 Marino Sanudo, *Liber Secretorum*, ed. Lock, pp 56-58.

32 Ibid., pp 69-70.

33 William Adam was born a round 1275, probably in southwest France. He was a member of the Dominican order and in 1318 was appointed as bishop of the newly archdiocese of Sultanieh. In 1324, he was appointed archbishop of Antivari and lived there until 1329, when he returned to France. He died probably in 1338-1339. See Giles Constable's Introduction to *William Adam,* pp 1-3.

34 William Adam, *How to defeat the Saracens*, ed. Constable, pp 26-38.

35 Ibid., p. 102 : "Ad quod autem complendum unicus est modus et facilis, ut scilet alique galee in mari Indico ponantur, que passum illum predicti gulfi Eden diligenter custodiant et impediant, ne de cetero aliquis portans predictas merces des India in Egiptum".

the merchants.[36] Another alternative for the military base, in case the Mongols would not give permission to station in their territories, was the island Diu (*insulis Diue*) in the Indian Ocean (*mare Indicum*).[37] Apparently, the Christians attempted to attack the Moslems in this region in 1182 when Reynauld de Châtillon sent a fleet of five galleys from the Red sea to attack the Egyptian ports and to blockade the island of Graye. The fleet was destroyed by the ships sent by Saladin, in 1183.[38]

The authors of the *Memoria* and *Directorium ad passagium faciendum* suggested a simple general passage. They held a traditional view of the crusade, but still suggested that the main expedition should be preceded by a blockade in the Mediterranean. They did not give any details regarding the interception of trade. The *Via ad Terram* Sanctam, an earlier French version of the *Memoria* did not mention any commercial blockade. The fleet did not have any military role and did not engage in any military action. According to the author, its only role was to transport the military supplies and the food supplies, women and children.[39]

In the crusading theory of the fourteenth century, the *passagium particulare* was not unanimously accepted. In his treatise, *Conseil sur le saint passage*, written in 1306, Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master of the Knights Templar, favoured a single general passage, arguing strongly against the concept of a preliminary passage.[40] He argued that a *parvum passagium* would lead to an

36 Ibid., p. 110: "Quarum due sunt tantum de domino sepe nominati imperatoris Persidis, que quidem sunt plurimum accomode, ut galee iste ad eas diuertant quando reparatione alique indigebunt, uel ad hiemandum, illo scilicet tempore quo non in mari Indico naugiatur, uel etiam ad deponendum merces a Babiloniorum mercatoribus per modum istum piraticum acquisitas. Vna uero istarum insularum uocatur Chyx, altera Hormutz".

37 Ibid., p. 112. Dive Insulide was probably the port of Diu is located in western India, in the Kathiawad area of modern Gujarat. Dive Insulide has also been identified with the Maldives or Laccadives in the western Indian Ocean. *Mare Indicum* does not correspond to the modern Indian Ocean, which covers approximatively a fifth of the total maritime space, but seems to correspond to the western sector of the Indian Ocean, including the Arabian Sea. See William Adam, *How to defeat the Saracens*, ed. Constable, p. 99 and 109.

38 Leopold, *How to recover the Holy Land*, p. 131.

39 *Memoria*, ed. Paviot, pp 256-258; *Directorium*, ed. Recueil des historiens des croisades, p. 408; *Via ad Terram Sanctam*, ed. Paviot, pp 178-179.

40 Jacques de Molay (1243-1314) was the last Grand Master (23rd) of the Knights Templar between 1292 and 1307 when the order was dissolved by order of Pope Clement v. From 1299 to 1303, as a response to the fall of Acre, the Grand Master was involved in a new crusade to recover the Holy Land. He tried to coordinate military actions between the military orders, Cyprus, Armenia and the Mongols to oppose the Mamluks and take back the costal cities of Syria. His plan was to take the island of Ruad, in the intent to establish

inevitable defeat of the crusaders and probably to a massacre because the Westerners had no fortified places in the Holy Land.[41] Also, the Grand Master strongly advised against the sending of such a preliminary force in Armenia. According to him, an alliance between the western forces and the Armenian forces would not be capable of defeating the sultan's army of some 12 000 to 15 000 knights and 40 000 to 50 000 archers stationed in the vicinity of Jerusalem.[42] He had a strong point because in theory, a preliminary passage should gather about 5 000 combatants and they could not defeat the Egyptian forces even with the help of the Armenian knights. Also, the sole fact of staying in Armenia (*terra infirma et mala*) would reduce the army of 4000 men to 500 in a year.[43] Two travelers, Mouhamed Edib and Marco Polo, mentioned that the Cilician plain was devastated by malaria.[44] Molay distrusted the Armenians and their fighting capacities, by suggesting that they run at the mere sight of the enemy and not open the gates of their castles.[45] These last arguments are a bit provocative because the external observers praised their courage in every conflict against the Mamluks.[46] We have to agree with the Grand Master that Armenia is not a practical solution for a military base in light of a general passage towards the Holy Land. This would force the main army to take the land route inflicting huge losses and would weaken the combatants before their goal.

Even though the theorists came from a variety of different backgrounds, their works included pragmatic military advice and the *passagium particulare* was a recurrent idea in their works.[47] There was definite contact between the theorists which allowed authors to influence each other and we can assume

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a Templar bridgehead, and from there launch attacks on the mainland. But the Mongols failed to appear and the Christian forces were defeated. He was arrested in 1307, by the order of King Philip IV, (October 13th) and charged with heresy. He was executed in 1314 (March 18th). See Demurger, *Jacques de Molay*; Demurger, *Vie et mort de l'ordre du Temple*; Demurger, *Les Templiers*; Barber, *The Trial of the Templars*.

41 Jacques de Molay, *Conseil sur le saint passage*, ed. Paviot, p. 184 : "(…) et esset perditio illorum omnium qui transirent in parvo passagio quia Cristiani hodie non tenentbin Terra illa, hoc est in regno Jerosolimitano, comitatu Tripolitano et principatu Antiocheno, civitatem, castrum vel fortaliciam aliquam, in qua se recolligere possent vel guarentire si opus esset. Et si passagium reperiretur in aliquo loco dictarum partium, nec eseet ita forte quod posset preliari cum exercitu soldani, totaliter perderetur".

42 Ibid., p. 184.

43 Ibid., p. 184.

44 Chevalier, *Les ordres religieux-militaires*, p. 576.

45 Jacques de Molay, *Conseil sur le saint passage*, ed. Paviot, p. 185.

46 Chevalier, *Les ordres religieux-militaires*, p. 577.

47 The theorists had different origins and came from a diverse background: Fidenzio de Padoue was a Franciscan friar from Padua; Ramon Lull was a Franciscan philosopher from

that the preliminary passage was a widely discussed mater among the theorists.[48] Fidenzio de Padoue's plan of establishing a new military strategy was truly original and served as a model for the aforementioned crusading theorists. Although the plans suggest that the interception of trade would diminish the Mamluks power, it also adopts aggressive military measures against the sultan. The role of the fleet is not restricted at setting up the embargo, but also to prepare the *passagium particulare*. This professional naval blockade of Egypt followed by a similarly organised preliminary land invasion, explicitly excluded any volunteer crusaders. In these conditions coordination between the fleet and the main invasion force (foot soldiers) was crucial. Therefore, in some treatises the main role of the fleet was not the interception of trade but the carrying out of strategic military measures and supporting the landing of the troops on the coastline. To support the *passagium particulare*, some theorists favoured other strategic measures. Hayton was a strong advocate of a Mongol alliance before the crusade was to be launched, but he also proposed a utopic project to reunite all eastern Christians (maronits, sirians, melchites) against the common enemy.[49] William Adam's bold proposition to blockade the Gulf of Aden to strengthen the embargo in the Mediterranean was truly original. While the author understands without a doubt the contemporary commercial system and while he is fully aware of the important role of Indian merchandise for Egypt's revenues, blockading the straits with these limited resources (only four galleys) was highly improbable, because of the limited range of the four galleys and the large maritime space to cover. The *passagium particulare* was not unanimously accepted by all theorists. Even if Jacques de Molay rejected the actual *passagium particulare,* he argued for a commercial blockade of Egypt, with only ten galleys, choosing Cyprus as base for operations.[50] His views were traditional, clearly not synchronised with the other theorists of his time, and were shaped by the disastrous campaigns in the East of 1300-1302, when the Templars were in a position of a *passagium particulare*

Majorca; Hayton was Armenian; The two Grand Masters of the military orders and William Adam were French; Marino Sanudo Torsello was a Venetian merchant.

48 For example we know that Ramon Lull met Henry II of Cyprus and Jacques de Molay in Cyprus in 1302, and there is a possibility that he encountered Charles II during his visit in Naples in 1294. Marino Sanudo met also Henry II and he knew Foulques de Villaret. Some theorists may have been inspired by some early works. Marino Sanudo definitely used Hayton's treatise, but it is probable that he also used the *Memoria* and Fidenzio de Padoue's treatise. See Leopold, *How to recover the Holy Land*, pp 49-50.

49 The idea of forming an alliance with the Mongols was also explored by the other theorists: Fidenzio de Padoue, Ramon Lull, William of Adam, Marino Sanudo.

50 Jacques de Molay, *Conseil sur le saint passage*, ed. Paviot, 187.

and they conquered Rouad, preceding the Mongol intervention, which had to play the role of the general passage. That said, the Mongols missed their chance and the Western forces were slaughtered by the enemy.

Imposing a commercial embargo in the Mediterranean was not an easy task for the papacy because it was entirely against the interest of the Italian maritime powers. Henry II, king of Cyprus, took action to intercept trade with the Mamluks, but his actions were inefficient due to the large number of the Italian trading city ships transiting the Cypriots waters.[51] He blamed mainly the Genoese who several times retaliated when their ships were captured by the Cypriot or Hospitaller fleet.[52] After the fall of Acre, popes issued a series of bulls forbidding trade with the Moslems to interrupt their supply of war material and to weaken them economically. The trading republics under the pressure of the Church had to adopt such measures.[53] Venice applied constant pressure on the papacy in order to continue his commercial activity with the sultan. In 1317, Venice claimed before the papal legate Bertrand de la Tour that the Venetians did not have lands, fields, vineyards or other possessions to feed themselves, and hence had to navigate to Egypt in search of gold, silver, tin, copper, cloth and saffron and to bring from there merchandise that is necessary for the whole world.[54] Other maritime cities obtained papal licences to continue trading with the sultan, but this practice undermined the ability of the embargo to affect Egypt's military power and hence to prepare the ground for a preliminary passage. Therefore, the concept of using economic warfare against the Mamluks was never fully adopted at the European courts: the efforts of the theorists collided with the commercial interests of the maritime powers.

Furthermore, the area to be protected was too large and the number of ships carrying merchandise was too great to be surveyed by a few galleys. The effects

51 Henry II in his memorandum favoured a naval blockade followed by a passage to Egypt. He fiercely criticised the Italian merchant cities and enforced with his galleys the papal embargo, he was more concerned with the prosperity of his own kingdom. He ignored the papal bans for the trade from Famagusta to Egypt, and Cyprus became an important commercial entrepôt in the Mediterranean for trade with the Levant. See Henri II, *Informatio*, ed. Paviot, pp 282-284; Richard, "Le royaume de Chypre", pp 126-133.

52 Marino Sanudo also blamed the Genoese, while the autor of the *Directorium* hold the Cypriots responsible for trading with the Mamluks. William Adam mentioned the Catalans, who maintained strong commercial relations with the Moslems. See Marino Sanudo, *Liber Secretorum*, ed. Lock, pp 62-63; *Directorium*, p. 409; William Adam, *How to defeat the Saracens*, ed. Constable, p. 26.

53 Asthor, *Levant trade*, p. 17.

54 Stanchev, *Spiritual rationality*, p. 135.

of winds and currents caused shipping to follow certain routes. For Levant-West voyages, the main routes in the medieval Mediterranean for commercial shipping lay along the chain of islands and coasts of the north part of the sea. The traffic was concentrated in certain channels that ran from Alexandria to Tyre or Beirut to Antioch and west along the coasts of Lycia or to the south coasts of Cyprus, thence to Rhodes, Karpathos and Crete. From there they turned north to the Ionian Sea and Sicily or Calabria. From Sicily through the Straits of Messina they could reach the Tyrrhenian Sea and follow the coastlines to the Straits of Gibraltar or they could go southwest past Malta to the south coast of Sardinia and Corsica to Provence. For west-east voyages, for which winds were more favourable, a variety of routes were possible, but it was preferred to follow the island-hopping sea lanes along the north of the sea.[55] The port of Rhodes was a major port of call both *en route* to *Outremer* and on the way home. Roger of Hoveden explained that when the island of Rhodes was reached, a third part of the sea lane between Acre and Brindisi was passed.[56] But the islands of the Cyclades were magnets for pirates and before imposing a major blockade, the Latin fleet would clear the sea of pirates.[57] The majority of theorists suggested that the Western fleet guard the quadrilateral bounded by Egypt, Cyprus, Beirut and Tripoli, but even this area covered over 4 000 square miles (10 359.95 km)^2 – the survey was to be a difficult task for them.[58] The mirage of commercial gains constantly induced ships to voyage away from the main sea lanes. The merchants could always follow the more dangerous routes along the southern coasts to avoid the embargo.

According to the theorists, galleys stationed in the Mediterranean had a double objective: to impose a commercial embargo and to harass enemy shores. But the galleys of the battle fleets used throughout the Middle Ages had serious logistical limitations. Because of their low freeboard, they were susceptible of being caught in the open in rising seas and being swamped.[59] Also, as Marino Sanudo pointed out, armed galleys could not stay at sea during bad weather and in winter. He advised against night time navigation, arguing that it was too dangerous to be far from port.[60] We can assume that Foulque de Villaret was aware of this problem and therefore recommended that the fleet

55 Pryor, *Geography, techonolgy and war*, pp 7-8; Balard, *La Méditerranée*, pp 191-199.

56 Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, vol.3, ed. Stubbs, p. 160 : "Et est sciendum, quod cum perventum fuerit ad insulam de Rodes, praeteritur tertia pars viae maris inter Accon et Brundusium".

57 Gertwagen, "Harbours and facilities", p. 111.

58 Leopold, *How to recover the Holy Land*, p. 133.

59 Pryor, *Geography, technology and war*, pp 69-70.

60 Sanudo, *Liber Secretorum,* ed. Lock, p. 58.

serve only eight months per year. Sanudo also notes that galleys in the summer could not be at sea for many days without frequently making landfall to take water.[61] The explanation of the limited duration of water supplies may be related to the problem of spoilage or putrefaction of the Mediterranean summer or they could have simply run out of provisions. The war galleys provisions and water carrying capacity was small – between four and eight tons – and their large crews of marines consumed great quantities of water and food.[62] And some theorists suggested that horses should be used in the raids although they would have consumed even more water. Therefore, supply problems seriously limited their striking range. John H. Pryor calculated – in ideal conditions – the cruising speed of a galley under oars is approximately two knots (3.704 km/h), which would allow for a cruising range for five days of around 250 miles (402 km).[63] However, the difficulties and variables involved in these calculations are numerous and we have to accept that this estimation is theoretical and that the ability of the Latin fleet to impose a strict commercial blockade of the Mediterranean and at the same time strike on the Mamluk shores was actually limited. In light of this evidence, it seems that the theorists' plans were highly idealistic.

Another logistical difficulty was the small size of the galleys relative to the round ships which were used for trade. The objective of the fleet was to capture the merchant flotillas rather than to sink them. Large sailing ships had superior tonnage in comparison with the war galleys, therefore they could not be easily stopped if they were sailing towards a favourable wind. If a large merchant ship was intercepted, there was no guarantee that it could be blocked and captured.[64] As Frederic C. Lane notes, the inability of galleys to capture large round ships under sail was commonplace in the Middle Ages. In 1264 the Genoese admiral Simone Grillo had to abandon his attempt to capture a large Venetian merchant ship, even though his flotilla captured all the other smaller ships in the convoy.[65] As can be seen, galleys had difficulty stopping and boarding their prey. Consequently, it can be argued that a Crusader fleet would have great difficulty imposing an efficient blockade on sea.

The goal of the *passagium particulare* was to prepare the general crusade by weakening the sultan's forces and his economy. One of the tasks of the Crusader flotilla was to intercept not only Christian shipping carrying contraband

61 Ibid., p. 58.

62 Pryor, "Water, water", p. 26.

63 Ibid., pp 26-27.

64 Pryor, *Geography, technology and war*, p. 121; Leopold, *How to recover the Holy Land*, p. 133.

65 Lane, *Venetian ships*, pp 4-5.

materials to Egypt but to seize all Muslim ships attempting to enter or to leave the country. In the thirteenth century, Muslim merchants from Egypt, Palestine and Syria voyaged north and south along the coast to Cilician Armenia in spite of the Crusader marina presence. With the rise of the *ghazi* emirates on the south and west coasts of Asia Minor in the fourteenth century, traffic was extended into the Aegean so the area to be surveyed was even larger.[66]

The crusading theory of the early fourteenth century illustrates a variety of ideas. The quality of the information given by the theorists varied. Some like Fidenzio de Padoue, Hayton, Foulques de Villaret and Jacques de Molay were familiar with warfare in the East, while others were less familiar. Nevertheless, there is apparent uniformity in the theorist's strategic thinking in the adoption of preliminary naval warfare against the Saracens. But all of the theorists were highly optimistic on the vulnerability of the Mamluks to a naval blockade and on this they overestimated the logistical resources of the fourteenth century. To impose an efficient blockade, the Crusader fleet would have had to survey the entire Mediterranean Sea and not just the main routes since the transgressors could always use secondary routes to avoid them. As was pointed out, the range of the galleys was limited and depended on many factors. The success of the *passagium particulare* depended on a series of co-ordinated expeditions relying on naval assistance and transport over long distances. Under these circumstances, imposing a general blockade in the fourteenth century was highly illusory – the British fleet succeeded in this only at the end of the eighteenth century.

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CHAPTER 10

Faith and Authority: Guy of Lusignan at the Battle of Acre (4th October 1189)

Stephen Bennett

Introduction

On 4th October 1189, the forces of Guy of Lusignan, king consort of Jerusalem, and Saladin (*Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb*), fought a critical battle near the port of Acre (Akko), which is set in a small peninsula in the Bay of Haifa.[1] Saladin enjoyed a short window of opportunity to destroy Guy's army before it received substantial reinforcements from Europe. In turn, Guy had to regain control of ground north of the city to enable an effective blockade. The study of events surrounding the battle of Acre, and the subsequent representations in primary sources provides an excellent opportunity to study Guy of Lusignan's capacity for command, as well as to reflect on his significance to the early stages of the Third Crusade.

Two years earlier, Saladin had destroyed the army of Jerusalem led by Guy at the battle of Hattin. With Guy captured and the majority of his troops either dead or in captivity, Saladin's forces swept through the kingdom; overrunning diminished Christian garrisons and negotiating the surrender of Jerusalem itself. The port city of Tyre, however, remained in Christian hands.[2] On 29th October 1187, the papal bull *Audita Tremendi* launched a new crusade to the Holy Land. Tyre, now under the command of Conrad of Montferrat, became a muster point for the gathering Christian forces.[3]

Guy of Lusignan had not been a universally popular choice as king and had faced serious challenges to his leadership.[4] Perhaps to divide the Christians,

1 On the topography of Acre, see R. Gertwagen, 'The Crusader Port of Acre', Layout and Problems of Maintenance', *Autour de la Première Croisade: Actes du Colloque de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and Latin East* (*Clermont-Ferrand, 22-5 juin 1995*) (Paris, 1996), pp. 553-82.

2 T.S. Asbridge, *The Crusades, The War for the Holy Land* (London, 2010), pp. 343-67.

3 L. & J. Riley Smith, *The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095-1274* (London, 1981), pp. 63-7; H. Nicholson & D. Nicolle, *God's Warriors: Knights Templar, Saracens and the Battle for Jerusalem* (Oxford, 2005), pp, 81-2.

4 C. Tyerman, *God's War, A New History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 365-6; Asbridge, *Crusades*, p. 342.

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Saladin released him from captivity in return for the important city of Ascalon (Ashkelon). Denied entry to Tyre by Conrad, Guy took the initiative and led a small army south. He brushed aside Saladin's covering force and joined with Pisan troops to threaten Muslim held Acre. In doing so, Guy hoped to make himself, rather than Tyre, the focal point of the Third Crusade.

Surprised, Saladin recalled his armies and moved to surround Guy. He then launched a series of attacks to try and destroy the Christians before they were significantly reinforced. The scene was set for a major confrontation; one which would define Guy's significance to the Third Crusade and Saladin's personal commitment to destroying the Christians in the field.

Historiography and Sources

The diverse primary sources that detail this event overlap at many points, and this allows for the construction of a reasonably reliable account of events in Acre from late August to early October 1189. Conversely, those differences that do occur provide the opportunity to consider the position of the writer in relation to Guy: most notably, in the silence of Capetian and Imperial sources.[5] A number of historians have looked at the chronology of the battle with Joshua Prawer producing an impressive account based on his intimate knowledge of the local topography and sources.[6] Despite this work, there remains room to consider how the battle challenges popular portrayals of Guy as a weak and ineffectual leader.

Roger of Howden was an English royal clerk who arrived in Acre sometime after October 1190.[7] He wrote the *Chronica* and likely authored the less pol-

5 Rigord is the principle Capetian source and he omitted this period in which King Philip's favourite, Conrad, was upstaged by Guy de Lusignan, *Ouevres de Rigord et de Guilaume le Breton*, ed. F. Delaborde (Paris, 1882); Imperial accounts viewed those that sailed to Acre rather than having marched with the Emperor as having taken the easy option, *The Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa: The History of the Expedition of the Emperor Frederick and Related Texts*, trans. G.A. Loud (Farnham, 2010), p. 57.

6 J. Prawer, *Histoire du Royaume Latin de Jerusalem*, Vol. 2, 2nd Edition (Paris, 1975), p. 43; See also J.H. Pryor's review of the siege of Acre, 'A Medieval Siege of Troy: The Fight to the Death at Acre, 1189-1191 or the Tears of Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn', *The Medieval Way of War, Studies in Medieval Military History in Honor of Bernard S. Bachrach*, ed. G.I. Halford (Farnham, 2015), pp. 97-116; as well as, R.C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare, 1097-1193*, Second Edition (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 187-8.

7 J. Gillingham, 'Roger of Howden on Crusade', *Medieval Historical Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds*, ed. D.O. Morgan (London, 1983), pp. 60-75.

ished *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi et Gesta Regis Ricardi*.[8] Both works share an obvious focus on the Angevin contingent and generally present a favourable impression of Guy of Lusignan.[9] The accounts of the battle of Acre in both the *Gesta* and *Chronica* seem to be closely related to a work of prose that William Stubbs included in his edition of the *Chronica.* This piece was first printed by John Basil Herold in 1549. The manuscript identified the author as Monachus, a Florentine who was archbishop of Caesarea between 1181 and 1192, and then patriarch of Jerusalem until 1202.[10] Lines 37-48 of the poem indicate that Monachus arrived at Acre in October 1189 as part of the bishop of Verona's contingent and he was not particularly associated with either Guy or Conrad.

Ralph of Diceto, dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, though not an eyewitness, did reproduce a letter to the Pope from two crusaders, Theobald the Prefect and Peter son of Leo, which included a brief account of the battle.[11] The basis for an account of the battle in the *French Continuation* of William of Tyre also seems to be an independent work, written from the point of view of the nobility of the Latin East. John Gillingham has argued that it may well have been completed some time after the Crusade with only the events of 1187 based on the contemporary chronicle of Ernoul.[12] However, Bernard Hamilton and Peter Edbury have suggested that Ernoul's account may well extend as far as 1197. Therefore its depiction of the battle of Acre was also arguably that of an eyewitness – albeit one hostile to Guy of Lusignan.[13]

In 1864, Stubbs published an edition of an anonymously authored eyewitness account of the Third Crusade entitled the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*.[14] The first book of the *Itinerarium* provides a summary of

8 D.M. Stenton, 'Roger of Howden and Benedict', *English Historical Review*, vol. 68 (1953), pp. 574-82; Roger of Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi et Gesta Regis Ricardi Benedicti abbatis*, 2 vols, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1867); Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 4 vols., ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1868-71).

9 Howden, *Gesta*, 1, pp. 343, 359.

10 See Howden, *Chronica*, 3, pp. cv-cvi, note the discussion on authorship, p. cv. I am working on a full translation of this piece for future publication.

11 Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines Historiarum, Opera Historica*, Vol. II, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1876), pp. 70-1; *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade, Sources in Translation*, trans. P. Edbury, (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 169-71.

12 Gillingham, *Howden*, pp. 60-75; Ernoul, *La Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard de Trésorier*, ed. L. de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1871).

13 'The Old French Continuation of William of Tyre', *Conquest*, trans. Edbury, pp. 11-145; B. Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs: Baldwin IV and the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 7-11.

14 *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1864).

events in Palestine before the arrival Philip II and Richard at Acre. Hans Mayer demonstrated this section was an independent work that followed another eyewitness account written between 1191 and 1192 by an anonymous author, which he called the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*.[15] Helen Nicholson described this author as a compiler at work in the crusader camp from 1st August 1191 to 2nd September 1192 who based their work on oral information and reports permeating the camp.[16]

Gaston Paris published *L'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte* in 1897, from a manuscript dated approximately to the late thirteenth century.[17] Paris conceded that lines 2387-4568, which relate to events in Acre between 1187 and 1191, correspond with Book I of the *Itinerarium*. The remainder was an original composition, written prior to 1199, which he attributed to a jongleur called Ambroise.[18] The text indicates that Ambroise was part of Richard the Lionheart's contingent and Marianne Ailes has suggested that he may have been a Norman cleric.[19] The *Itinerarium* and *Estoire* were seemingly drawn from very similar eyewitness accounts. Though the *Itinerarium* is more expansive, both seem to correspond with Monachus' poem and may well have share a connection to it.

Two eyewitness Muslim accounts from members of Saladin's inner circle provide alternative perspectives on the battle. 'Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī was Saladin's secretary and was present at the siege of Acre.[20] Bahā al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād only joined the court in 1188, but was soon appointed judge of the army and was also present at the siege.[21] In addition, there is Ali 'Izz al- Din Ibn

15 *Das Itinerarium Peregrinorum, Ein Zeitgenössiche Englische Chronik zum Dritten Kreuzzug in Ursprünglisher Gestalt*, ed. H.E. Mayer (Stuttgart, 1962).

16 *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade: The Itinerarium Peregrinorum and the Gesta Regis Ricardi*, ed. H.J. Nicholson (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 6-10.

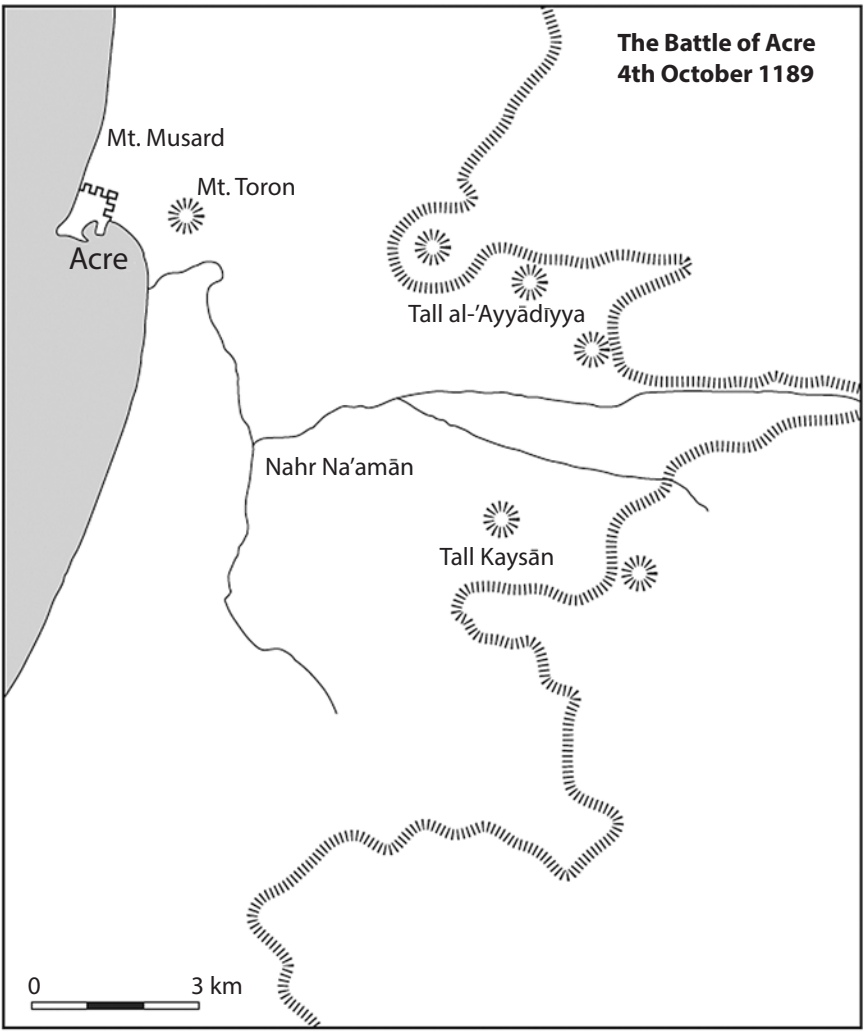
17 Ambroise, *Estoire de la Guerre Saint, Histoire en Vers de la Troisieème Croisade*, ed. G. Parod (Paris, 1897).

18 Ambroise, *Estoire*, Paris, pp. vi-xii.

19 Ambroise, *The History of the Holy War, Ambroise's Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, II. Translation, trans. M. Ailes (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 1-3. This has been contested by Françoise Viellard, who, based on a close study of the representation of the Norman contingent in the *Itinerarium* and *Estoire*, concluded that Ambroise was more likely to hail from another region of Angevin France, F. Vielliard, 'Richard Coeur de Lion et Son Entourage Normand, Le Témoigne de l'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte', *Bibliotheque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, vol. 160 (2002), pp. 7-26; See also M. Bennett, 'Steriotype Normans in Old French Vernacular Literature', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, Vol. 19 (1987), p. 26.

20 'Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin*, trans. H. Massé (Paris, 1972).

21 Bahā al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin*, trans. D.S. Richards (Aldershot, 2001).



MAP 10.1 *The Battle of Acre*

al-Athir al-Jazari's critical view of Saladin. Praised by Gabrieli for his original thinking, Ibn al-Athīr's narrative is based on the previous two accounts, but is a particularly useful contrast to his somewhat partisan sources.[22]

22 F. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, trans. E.J. Costello (Berkeley, 1969), pp. xxvii-iii. Richards argued that Ibn al-Athīr wrote the account of the battle of Acre within ten years, Ibn al-Athīr, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fi'l-ta'rīkh*, Part 2, trans. D.S. Richards (Aldershot, 2007), p. 3.

The Gathering of the Hosts – Events Leading up to the Battle

Ibn al-Athīr was highly critical of Saladin's actions in the aftermath of Hattin for failing to pursue *Jihad*. Saladin is blamed for allowing Christian refugees to concentrate at Tyre after being given safe passage from surrendered towns and fortresses. Indeed, according to the Latin accounts, Guy's camp outside Tyre served as a rallying point, with 'the Templars, Hospitallers and other Christians' flocking to him and giving 'adhesion to him as their lord'. Moreover, with the support of Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem, Guy is depicted leading the army south to Acre.[23] The letter of Theobald and Peter confirmed the support of the Templars, Hospitallers, Pisans, and the papal legate, but it also described the hostility of Conrad towards Guy.[24] Ibn Shaddād described the army that brushed aside the Muslim covering force at al-Iskandarūna as formed 'by Franks from Tyre and those with the King'.[25] In contrast to the *French Continuation*, Ambroise represents Guy as a man of great faith, who, in leading a small force of 400 knights and 700 infantry to Acre, puts his trust in God.[26]

Guy of Lusignan probably arrived on 26th August 1189. Mindful of the Muslim garrison and other forces nearby, the crusaders occupied Mt. Toron, a prominent hill about 1,200 metres east of Acre, in the dark.[27] Noting Saladin's absence, the crusaders launched an immediate assault on the city, but were easily repulsed and set about creating a blockade of the gates and other access points.[28] Arriving shortly after the land contingent, the Pisans beached their fleet and took up position at the mouth of the Nahr Na'amān; thus cutting off easy communication with Haifa (a major source of supply for Acre).[29] Gradually, with the arrival of reinforcements, the crusaders tightened their hold over the city.

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23 Howden, *Chronica*, p. 20; Ambroise, ll. 2714-38; *Itinerarium*, 1, p. 25; *French Continuation*, p. 79.

24 Theobald & Peter, Diceto, 2, p. 70.

25 Ibn Shaddād, p. 103.

26 Ambroise, ll. 2748-9; Itinerarium, p. 70; also called the Hill of Prayers (Tall al-Musalliyan) and Tall al-Fukhkhār, J. Garstang, 'Geography of the Plain of Acre', *Bulletin of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem*, vol. 2 (1922), pp. 10-12; M.C. Lyons & D.E.P. Jackson, *Saladin, The Politics of Holy War* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 300; Prawer raises this force to 600 knights and 7,000 infantry, *Histoire*, 2, p. 43, and Pryor follows the *Itinerarium's* force of 9,000, including 700 horse, 'Medieval Siege of Troy', p. 101.

27 Ambroise, ll. 2783-6. See also Ibn Shaddād, p. 156; 'Imād al-Dīn, p. 170; Howden, *Gesta*, 2, p. 95.

28 *Itinerarium*, p. 71.

29 Also known as the river Belus, Ambroise, ll. 2890-900; Howden, *Chronica*, vol 3, p. 20.

Upon arrival a few days later, Saladin summoned reinforcements which included some of his most trusted and experienced commanders; including his nephew, al-Muzaffar Taqī al-Dīn 'Umar. Forces arrived from across the Jazira including Mosul, Diyār Bakr, and Sinjār, and they began to deploy around Saladin's camp on Tall Kaysān.[30] Despite Ibn al-Athīr's later criticism of the absence of much of the Muslim army, a significant military force had nether-the-less been gathered.[31] Saladin seemingly understood the need for haste, but may have underestimated the speed at which Christian reinforcements would arrive.

During the months of August and September 1189, contingents of crusaders made their way to Acre. A Danish and Frisian fleet apparently arrived in early September at a particularly difficult time for the Christians, with a Flemish contingent under James of Avesnes landing soon after.[32] Two weeks later a group of prominent French nobles, Germans forces under Ludwig the Pious, landgrave of Thuringia, and troops from northern Italy also reached Acre.[33] Finally even Conrad of Montferrat was drawn from Tyre to join the siege for a time.[34]

Over the next few weeks, the two armies struggled to gain some advantage, but on 15th October, while Saladin attacked the main crusader camp, al-Muzaffar captured Montmusard, an area to the north of Acre.[35] This opened up the

30 *French Continuation*, p. 80; Theobald & Peter, Diceto, 2, p. 70, Monachus, Howden, *Chronica*, p. cviii; Ibn al-Athīr, 2 p. 367.

31 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, p. 367. See also. B.Z. Kedar, 'A Western Survey of Saladin's Forces at the Siege of Acre', *Montjoie, Studies in Crusade History in Honour of Hans Eberhard Mayer* (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 113-22.

32 *French Continuation*, pp. 81-2; Monachus, Howden, *Chronica*, p. cviii; *Itinerarium*, pp. 74-5, See also, Arnold of Lubeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, 2 vols, ed. I.M. Lappenburg (Hanover, 1868), pp. 100-250.

33 Ludwig III, landgrave of Thuringia was nephew to Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, but he elected to march south to Brindisi and sail for Tyre, W. Heinemeyer, *Ludwig III. Der fromme, Landgraf con Thüringen* (Berlin, 1987), pp. 421-2.

34 Ambroise, 2836-63, 2916-29; Theobald & Peter, Diceto, 2, p. 70; Howden, *Chronica*, pp. 20-1; *Itinerarium*, pp. 76-7; Ansbert mentioned the arrival in Acre of Ludwig III, landgrave of Thuringia, but makes no mention of the battle, *The Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa: The History of the Expedition of the Emperor Frederick and Related Texts*, trans. G.A. Loud (Farnham, 2010), p. 57.

35 Ambroise, ll. 2822-35; Theobald & Peter, Diceto, 2, p. 70. Despite its name, Montmusard was not an area of high ground, but a rural suburb of Acre, probably named after a holy place or tomb (*Mazār*) located at a road junction. See D. Jacoby, 'Montmusard, Suburb of Crusader Acre: The First Stage of Development', *Outremer, Studies in the History of the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem Presented to Joshua Prawer* (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 205-17.

northern route, allowing Saladin to usher a caravan of camels laden with provisions into the city.[36] Not content with this partial victory, Saladin maintained pressure on the Christians with sources describing a series of encounters that included the ambush of Latin foragers.[37] Around this time Saladin redeployed his forces: the baggage and his headquarters moved to Tall al-'Ayyādīyya, with the sultan's tent pitched on the high ground. His right wing stretched to the forces of al-Muzaffar in Montmusard while his left wing formed up south of his previous camp on Tall al-'Ayyādīyya.[38] Monachus described the pressure the Christians were now under,

> Through the paucity of our numbers we could endure no more
> So many enemy attacks, so noble envoys
> Were sent to Tyre and immediately set sail,
> So that the Marquis would Christendom avail.[39]

Thus, the days leading up to 4th October saw intense and sustained close combat as each side sought to gain a degree of advantage. The occupation of Montmusard had opened the road north and posed a direct threat to the continuation of the siege by the crusader army.

Between a Hammer and an Anvil – The Battle of Acre

Saladin's commitment of significant military resources had compromised the Latin siege and its collapse would threaten Guy's position within the leadership of the Third Crusade. Monachus described the situation for the Christians,

> Our men though they were on all sides enclosed
> Yet they were all in common to fight aroused.
> Therefore they set a certain day, on which they would fight,
> And at long distance from their camp, the Turks were put to flight,[40]

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36 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, pp. 365-6; Ibn Shaddād, p. 98; Ambroise, ll. 2896-907; Theobald & Peter, Diceto, p. 70; *Itinerarium*, p. 75.

37 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, p. 366; Ibn Shaddād, p. 100.

38 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, p. 367.

39 '*Cum nostrorum paucitas nequit ultra pati tot incursus hostium nobiles legati Tyrum missi protenus se committunt rati, ut succurrat Marchio Chritianitati.*' Monachus, Howden, *Chronica*, p. cviii.

40 '*Nostri licet undique forent circumsepti ad pugnam communiter tamen sunt erecti. Ergo*

Ibn al-Athīr believed that the Latin decision to fight on 4th October was necessitated by Muslim reinforcements *en route* from Egypt. The *French Continuation* argued that it was due to a lack of food, and the *Itinerarium* indicated that the crusader army had reached sufficient strength to attack Saladin's camp.[41] Together with the loss of Montmusard, each could have provided the impetus for battle. Moreover, as John Pryor points out, Saladin's new location was so close and his army so dispersed as to invite attack.[42] Ibn Shaddād described the crusaders' deployment,

> The Franks manoeuvred in a way they had not normally done before, horse and foot, great and small, and they took up their battle formations beyond their tents as centre, right wing and left wing. In the centre was the king with the Gospel carried before him, covered by a cloth of satin. Four persons held the corners as they walked before the king. The right wing deployed to face the left wing of the Muslim army across its whole length and the enemy's left wing deployed opposite our right wing, right to its limit. They seized the tops of the hills with their extreme right reaching the river, while their extreme left reached the sea.[43]

Theobald and Peter placed Guy with a mixed Hospitaller and French squadron in the front line as did the *Itinerarium*,

> King Guy, the Templars, the Hospitallers, the count of Brienne and the landgrave proceeded in order, each with their own unit.[44]

The *French Continuation* described Guy as guarding 'the encampment against the Saracens of the city' and Ambroise also placed him with his brother on Mt. Toron.[45] Command of a strong reserve was a relatively common position for a medieval commander in the initial stages of a battle, and by standing on Mt. Toron, Guy would have enjoyed a more favourable view of proceedings.[46]

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diem statuunt certam, qua pugnarent, cumque Turcos eminus a castris fugarent,' Monachus, Howden, *Chronica*, p. cix.

41 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, p. 366; *French Continuation*, p. 82; *Itinerarium*, p. 77.

42 Pryor, 'A Medieval Siege of Troy', p. 103.

43 Ibn Shaddād, p. 101

44 Theobald & Peter, Diceto, 2, p. 70; *Itinerarium*, p. 78.

45 *French Continuation*, p. 82; Ambroise, ll. 3012-15.

46 J.F. Verbruggan, *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe During the Middle Ages*, Second Edition, trans. (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 217-20; P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, trans. M. Jones (Oxford, 1984), p. 236.

However, in each account, despite the presence of a large number of powerful nobles, Guy was placed in a position of overall command.

Ibn Shaddād suggested that the Muslims had time to deploy their own forces and that Saladin had ordered the herald to make suitably heroic proclamations. However, such a considered deployment sits unfavourably with his description of the rapid assault made on the Muslim right wing under al-Muzaffar in Montmusard.[47] Both Ibn al-Athīr and Ibn Shaddād described the withdrawal of al-Muzaffar under pressure and Saladin's redeployment of significant numbers of troops from the centre to assist him. The flight, whether deliberate or feigned, allowed the crusaders to retake Montmusard and close the coastal road.

The exploitation by the Christians of the now weakened Muslim centre is detailed variously in the sources. Ibn al-Athīr described the crusaders charging as one: overwhelming the Muslims and surging on towards Saladin's camp on Tall al-'Ayyādīyya before finally rallying on the reverse slope. Ibn Shaddād and Imād al-Dīn noted the collapse of the inexperienced troops of Diyār Bakr in the face of a controlled advance by Christian knights behind a steady force of infantry. This advance is described in the *Itinerarium* with the foot dividing and allowing the cavalry to move through them and engage the enemy at the appropriate moment.[48] While conceding that Saladin had to retire from Tall al-'Ayyādīyya as the forces around him had dissolved in flight, Muslim casualties are characteristically limited by Ibn Shaddād to just two members of the court, one of the wardrobe staff', and 'a crowd of pages, muleteers and grooms'.[49]

Despite this apparent success, the crusaders remained in a perilous position. Mindful of a trap by al-Muzaffar, the crusader left wing, probably including the Hospitallers, had remained in Montmusard. With the lead element of their assault force on the far side of Tall al-'Ayyādīyya, the remainder had taken to plundering Saladin's camp and a nearby bazaar. Isolated from the main army and disorganised by the search for booty, their commanders attempted to restore discipline and withdraw back across the plain of Acre. As Saladin rallied the remnants of the centre, the intact Muslim left wing and returning troops previously sent to reinforce the right wing intervened. With the crusaders facing encirclement, Saladin is said to have delivered the *coup de grace*.[50]

47 Prawer argues that the Latin attack was aimed against the weak point of the Muslim positions and led by the Hospitallers and Templars, *Histoire,* 2, pp. 46-51.

48 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, p. 367; *Itinerarium*, p. 78; Prawer placed the count of Brienne and Ludwig of Thuringia at the head of this attack, *Histoire,* 2, p. 49.

49 Ibn Shaddād, pp. 102-3, 150 lost, p. 104.

50 Monachus, Howden, *Chronica*, p. cix. The rout is also described as being instigated by a horse bolting from the German squadron, Ambroise, ll. 2989-99; *Itinerarium*, p. 79.

At this point, Guy is depicted leading a large force that included the master of the Templars and Andrew of Brienne against the Muslim counter-attack.[51] Acting as a rearguard for the crusader withdrawal, the Templars were overwhelmed and the master captured and executed.[52] Andrew of Brienne also fell and the *French Continuation*'s depiction of Guy's survival may indicate the critical stance of the author. More supportive sources described Guy's intervention in the withdrawal to save Conrad of Monferrat and subsequent return to hold the camp against the attack of the Acre garrison alongside his brother, Geoffrey, and James of Avesnes.[53]

The crusaders had suffered significant casualties, but despite his personal intervention, Saladin had failed to take their camp, and could not persuade his troops to resume battle the next day.[54] Moreover, the Franks had retained those key positions north of the city that had been captured earlier in the day.[55] Having failed to renew the offensive, Saladin ordered the dead Christians to be thrown into the Nahr Na'amān to taint the crusader's water supply and accepted a withdrawal to Tall al-Kharrūba on 15th October.[56]

Conclusions

Ibn al-Athīr was critical of Saladin's failure to concentrate a greater part of his army to confront the Latin army at Acre, and, in addition to genuine zeal for Saladin's successes, it was possibly to counter this type of criticism that Ibn Shaddād listed those forces that participated in the battle. Just as one must acknowledge threats from Tyre and Tripoli, the approach of Frederick

51 The *Itinerarium* has the Templars leading the assault on Tall al-'Ayyādīyya, p. 78. Given that the Rule of the Templars placed the marshal in command of Templar forces in the field, this does not preclude Gerard of Ridefort from riding with Guy as part of the reserve. See *The Rule of the Templars, The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar*, trans. J.M. Upton-Ward (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 59-60. For use of the reserve under a medieval commander see Verbruggan, pp. 220-1.

52 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, p. 368. Latin accounts just described Gerard de Ridefort as killed, Ambroise, 3016-27; Theobald & Peter, Diceto, 11, p. 71; Monachus, Howden, *Chronica*, p. cix; Howden, *Chronica*, p. 21.

53 Ambroise, ll. 3012-5, 32-8, 40-9; *Itinerarium*, p. 80.

54 Ibn Shaddād described 4000 casualties for the Christian left wing alone; Ambroise noted 5000 'lesser men' whose bodies were left naked on the battlefield, ll. 3030.

55 Howden, *Cronica*, 3, p. 22; *Gesta*, 2, p. 96.

56 Ambroise, ll. 3087-98. The withdrawal was decided at a council meeting attended by Ibn Shaddād, p. 168, and Imād al-Dīn, p. 186.

Barbarossa, as well as the need to garrison the ports of Damietta and Alexandra, it is vital to place the battle of Acre in context. Through his personal attendance at the siege, alongside an army that included so many of his most noted commanders, it is clear that Saladin considered this of primary importance. In failing to destroy Guy's army in late August, early September, Saladin faced a battle on near equal terms on 4th October 1189, and came close to seeing his whole force routed. As Ibn al-Athīr noted,

> By the grace of God Almighty the Franks did not throw down Saladin's tents. Had they done so, our people would have known that they had reached it and that our troops had fled before them and there would have been a complete rout.[57]

During the battle, Saladin understood the importance to the siege of Montmusard and quickly redeployed his forces when his right wing failed. Yet these reserves failed to repel the crusaders and severely weakened his centre. Even Ibn Shaddād conceded that Saladin had been forced to flee from the crusader attack, losing some of his personal staff in the process. Until the dispersal of the Christian forces, Saladin seems like a commander constantly one step behind his adversaries: reacting to a situation that has already moved on. Moreover, despite being given the lead role by Ibn Shaddād, the Muslim army seemingly counter-attacked the crusaders without Saladin's instigation. However, his limitations as a field commander in underestimating the speed of crusader reinforcement and failing to overwhelm Guy should not detract from his personal commitment to *Jihad*.

In comparison, Guy of Lusignan is portrayed as the man at the critical point at each stage of the battle. On the day of the battle, as fitting an anointed king, he is placed at the front and centre of the Christian army, before moving onto Mt. Toron to take up a favoured position for a medieval general. With the Latin army overextended, Guy is described leading a strong force to facilitate a withdrawal, before returning to hold the camp and assist in the defence against the garrison's sally. Apart from the criticism of his survival in the *French Continuation*, Guy of Lusignan is represented as the archetypal medieval commander: brave, resourceful, and decisive, who even finds time to save his arch rival from certain death in the midst of the swirling melee. His leadership of the Third Crusade in its initial stages was clearly demonstrated, firstly, by his success in drawing crusaders to him at Acre, and then, by his command of the Latin army in battle on 4th October 1189. In capturing Montmusard, closing the

57 Ibn al-Athīr, 2, p. 367.

coastal road, and forcing Saladin's withdrawal, Guy retained the strategic advantage over both Saladin and his rival, Conrad of Montferrat.

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CHAPTER 11

By the Sword or by an Oath: Siege Warfare in the Latin East 1097-1131

Ian Wilson

The military history of Outremer is full of spectacular sieges. Randall Rogers, in his study *Latin Siege Warfare*, noted that the scale of these sieges went "*far beyond the usual experience of Latin combatants*". Sieges in northern Europe between the late eleventh and early decades of the twelfth centuries were usually small affairs. However, around the shores of the Mediterranean the twelfth century witnessed some of the great sieges that defined the epoch and matched – if not surpassed – Roman siegecraft. These confrontations might eclipse the 'typical' sieges, argued Rogers, but it was the former that defined the epoch.[1] Numerous studies have followed Rogers's lead, and these great sieges have become synonymous with crusader siege warfare.[2]

No agreed-upon list of these 'exemplar sieges', as I have labelled them, exists. However, if one uses Rogers's study as a starting point, about a dozen episodes emerge for this early period. By date of capture these were Nicaea (1097), Antioch (1098), Ma'arrat al-Nu'man (1098), Jerusalem (1099), Arsuf (1101), Caesarea (1101), Acre (1104), Tripoli (1109), Beirut (1110), Sidon (1110), and Tyre (1124).[3] These sieges have attracted military historians because they provide a rich insight into the technicalities and technology of medieval siegecraft. Equally for those who study history of the Latin East, they were the decisive encounters, the major turning points in Outremer's formation. As a group they share several common characteristics that have come to define crusader siege warfare. The vast majority of these sieges involved the great cities of the Mediterranean coast. Overcoming these bastions of Roman engineering

1 Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare*, pp. 5-7.

2 Bradbury, *The Medieval Siege*, pp. 93-127; Purton, *A History of the Early Medieval Siege,* pp. 209-34. Popular works on sieges have also been drawn to these spectacular sieges although their selection is usually narrower. See Norris, *Medieval Siege Warfare*, pp. 61-62, 67-69, & 72-74; Hindley, *Medieval Siege and Siegecraft*, pp. 49-50, 85-87, 117-18, & 139-40; McGlynn, *By Sword and Fire*, pp. 56-58, 107-08, & 154-57.

3 Rogers continued his analyses to the close of the twelfth century, adding five more sieges to the list: Damascus (1148), Ascalon (1153), Alexandria (1167), Damietta (1169), and Acre (1187-91).

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required great skill and intense effort. These sieges were protracted and complex affairs, involving both land and sea forces as well as large pieces of siege machinery, notably the iconic siege tower. Finally, the majority ended in a Frankish victory after they had breached and stormed the outer defences. Cities captured in this way, by force, were held to be at the mercy of the victors, resulting in wholesale massacres and numerous atrocities against the vanquished population.

The exemplar sieges produce a coherent narrative, but one must wonder at the narrow focus. The thesis suffers from two critical omissions. Firstly, there is no interest in or analysis of the minor sieges, and secondly, no attention is given to sieges instigated by the Muslim powers of the region. These omissions raise the question: Are historians drawing inaccurate conclusions by focusing too narrowly on decisive sieges and ignoring the bigger picture?

Defining Sieges

Before turning to the largely ignored mundane sieges, it is necessary here to clarify the definition I have used for a siege and my reason for its usage. A siege refers to any hostile attack against a walled stronghold. I found that a tighter definition of a formal blockade did not work. Medieval warfare was not compartmentalised. Raiding, for example, was a military action in its own right, but devastating the economic hinterland was often the first step in undermining a fortification. Bohemond's campaign against Apamea in 1100 illustrates the problem. The sources tell us that Bohemond stayed in the area for several days, laying waste to the crops but not attacking the town. However, a contemporary, Ibn al-Qalānisī, considered Bohemond's behaviour as part of a siege.[4]

The opportunistic nature of warfare also adds an uncertainty over the attackers' intentions. In 1115, the Franks attacked Gistrum,[5] not with the objective of taking the fortress but to force the nearby Muslim army into open battle. However, the Franks' initial attack succeeded, resulting in the devastation of the lower town. Yet the burning town failed to bring the Muslim army to battle. The Franks at this point held a council to decide whether to pursue the offensive or to return to protect their own lands. Fearing Bursuq, the Muslim commander, would outmanoeuvre them, they abandoned the siege and

4 Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, p. 49.

5 Gistrum remains unidentified. Asbridge and Edgington in *Walter the Chancellor's The Antiochene Wars*, p. 94, n. 104, suggested that the citadel could be Shaizar or one of two fortifications, Tall ibn-Ma'shar or Jisr al-Shugar.

returned home. In brief, sieges were not static as often imagined but highly fluid operations in which the intentions for the modern reader often remain obscure.[6]

The Mundane Sieges

'Exemplar sieges' account for less than 15 per cent of Frankish siege activity. The first generation of Franks undertook about 90 sieges up to the death of Baldwin II in 1131. Even this figure underestimates the actual level of military activity. For numerous campaigns the sources are terse and uninformative, recording simply the capture of a fortification. While care is required in the use of precise numbers, I believe this wider sample of sieges better reflects Frankish martial customs.

The overall impression is that the majority of sieges occurred against the small walled towns, castles, and towers of the interior. Also apparent is the wider geographical spread of sieges. Besides the littoral, the other key areas of conflict included 90 kilometres of frontier zone between Antioch and Aleppo, the county of Edessa, and the important Homs gap. Each of these regions had their own patterns of conflict, but they all shared a style of siege warfare that would have been familiar in Western Europe.

Unlike the exemplar sieges, these sieges were short-lived affairs. Where the length of the siege is known, about three-quarters ended within thirty days. At Summaysat (Samosata) in 1097, the siege was abandoned after a few days following a failed assault and heavy Christian losses.[7] In 1122, the attack on Balis ceased after the arrival of a group of Turcoman horsemen.[8] Early resistance, in the form of a repulsed assault or a successful sortie, often proved sufficient for the attackers to abandon their designs on the fortification. Conversely, the sudden assault at Tortosa (Tartus), in 1102, brought a quick victory, either catching the garrison by surprise or forcing it into a quick capitulation.[9]

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6 Walter the Chancellor, *Bella Antiochena*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, i. 4, p. 70.

7 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, iii.23, pp. 170-73; William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, iv.4, pp. 237-38; Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, trans. A.E. Dostourian, ii. 117, p. 168-9.

8 Kemal ed–Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', pp. 364-65.

9 Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, ii, 7, pp. 433-35; Caffaro, *De liberatione civitatum,* ed. L.T. Belgrano, pp. 118-19; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, viii, 42, pp. 632-33; Bartolf of Nangis, *'Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnantium'*, p. 533.

Surprise, tricks, and intimidation frequently appeared in these sieges. During the First Crusade, ill-fated Tortosa fell to a ruse when Raymond Pilet lit several campfires, fooling the inhabitants into thinking a large army had surrounded the town during the night.[10] A few years later, the Franks were lured into making an assault by the *qadi* of Jabala, who had used local Christians to lure Franks into an ambush.[11] Behaviours typical of the low-intensity warfare found in the West but equally familiar to the Turkish warlords of northern Syria.[12]

In these sieges, technology played a supporting role. Various pieces of artillery could be made or assembled within a few days, but the larger items such as siege towers required time and a substantial supply of wood. Large siege engines were built on-site and the materials had to be sourced locally.[13] In the coastal sieges, this demand for suitable wood was met by dismantling ships. In the interior, the shortage of suitable wood and the logistical problem of moving these devices to the siege site made their construction and deployment difficult, although not unknown. For example, in 1110, Tancred deployed a huge ram-type machine at al-Atharib, a device that made such noise its hammering could be heard three miles away.[14] However, the length of sieges, the lack of resources, and the difficult terrain made the deployment of the most spectacular items like siege towers difficult. What emerges from these observations is that siege warfare in Outremer was less intensive than the view projected by traditional historiography.

How Sieges Ended

An examination of a wider sample shows the riskiness of siege warfare and calls into question the importance of the assault as the primary means of ending a siege. Based on this larger sample, more than a quarter of the sieges ended in failure. The sources mention some of these defeats, but the victorious sieges dominate the chronicles. Aborted sieges were usually glossed over, ignored, or turned into an object lesson on sin. For example, Arqah, besieged in the winter

10 *Gesta Francorum*, x. 34, ed. & trans. R. Hill, p. 84.

11 Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, pp. 38-39.

12 France, *Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades,* p. 12; Köhler, *Alliances and Treaties*, p. 67.

13 France, *Victory in the East*, pp. 314 & 346-47, for the problems at Ma'arrat Numan and Jerusalem; DeVries and Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, pp. 172-73, on logistical problems of building siege towers.

14 Kemal ed–Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', p. 597.

of 1099, received only limited coverage by the numerous histories of the First Crusade. Yet it was the second longest siege of the First Crusade, lasting nearly three months.[15] Other sieges were overshadowed by later Frankish victories. William of Tyre was interested in the conquest of Tyre, the city that became his episcopal seat. He dedicated a large part of book 13 of his history to its successful capture. However, he gave only minimal coverage of the unsuccessful siege of 1111. All William's material on the city's topography, its fortifications, and its place in the Christian world formed part of his narrative on the later triumphant siege.[16]

A variety of reasons led to these defeats, timely reinforcements, weather, and the inability to hold armies together for long periods being the most common. Even the successful sieges involved numerous assaults before a breach occurred. At Nicaea, Ma'arrat, and Jerusalem the sources inform us that it took three or four costly assaults before a breach occurred.[17] In most cases, the sources remain vague, mentioning frequent and furious attacks. At Apamea in 1106, assaults continued for three weeks with no success.[18] Here, as in many cases, it is hard to distinguish between a full assault and skirmishing. However, when grouped with the substantial number of abandoned sieges, it illustrates that siege warfare remained an uncertain, costly, and risky enterprise. Perhaps the large-scale assaults should be taken as a sign of strategic weakness rather than acts of unbridled religious fever.

The risks involved for both protagonists encouraged negotiated settlements. Truces allowed the besieger to control a valuable asset and the besieged to secure their lives along with the majority of their property. These risk-avoid-

15 The main eyewitness accounts of the siege were *Gesta Francorum*, x. 34-35, pp. 83-85, and Raymond D'Aguilers, *Le Liber*, ed. J.H. Hill and L.L. Hill, pp. 106-24; both accounts are dull and abrupt. Raymond's account, although long, mainly focuses on the visions and the dispute over the Holy Lance. Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, v. 33-36, pp. 381-87, provides valuable extra material and a different perspective but adds little extra detail. For modern accounts of the siege, see Asbridge, *The First Crusade,* pp. 282-85: France, *Victory in the East,* pp. 319-21; Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare*, p. 46

16 William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R.H.C. Huygens, xi. 17 pp. 521-22 & xiii, 1-14, pp. 584-602.

17 After an initial probing assault, there were four further assaults at Nicaea, all of which ended in failure. At Ma'arrat, two occurred unsuccessfully before the town's defences were breached. At Jerusalem, the position is harder to gauge. Again, an early, probing assault on June 13 failed; this was followed by a full-blown assault that lasted a number of days. It is unclear if this was one assault or a series. Also, there is little information on the assaults by Raymond of Toulouse.

18 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, x.20, pp. 736-37.

ance strategies meant that the majority of sieges ended in a negotiated surrender. In the period from 1097 to 1131, over 40 per cent of sieges ended in some form of peace agreement. Restricting the analysis to just the victories, nearly 60 per cent of Frankish victories ended in a truce. If custom arises from habitual activity, negotiated surrender can be viewed as a customary practice, one that becomes even more apparent if one unpicks the accounts of the exemplar sieges.

Ma'arrat al-Nu'man (1098)

If we take as an example the siege of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, well known as one of the worst crusader massacres, there is still evidence of diplomatic activity in addition to Bohemond's infamous act of treachery. The traditional account mentions two early assaults against the town's walls. Occurring on the 28th and 29th of November, respectively, both ended in failure. The narrative then jumps to the final assault, which resulted in the Ma'arrat's surrender. The sequence of events becomes confused, but it seems likely that the poorer pilgrims forced entry into the town and a massacre ensured – events concurrent with Bohemond's offer of protection to a group of Saracens, only later to go back on his word and kill or enslave them.[19]

This traditional narrative of the events has a two-week gap between the second assault and the fall of the city on December 11. In this period, the Latin sources concentrate on two activities: the construction of siege machinery and the spiritual aspects as Peter Bartholomew conversed with St Peter and St Andrew. The conversation reveals the miserable state of the Christian army as hunger, divisions, and the winter weather undermined the Franks' discipline and morale. These factors, coupled with the failure of the two earlier assaults, would have encouraged discussions with the city elders. A diplomatic approach recalled by the Damascene chronicler Ibn al-Qalanisi, who mentioned the Franks approaching the town leaders prior to the final storming of the walls:

> Prior to this, messengers had repeatedly come to them from the Franks with proposal of settlement by negotiation and the surrender of the city,

19 *Gesta Francorum*, ed. & trans. R. Hill, x. 32, pp. 77-80; Raymond D'Aguilers, *Le Liber*, ed. J.H. Hill and L.L. Hill, pp. 94-8; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, v. 27-30, pp. 370-77; Ralph of Caen, *Tancredus*, ed. E. D'Angelo, p. 89; Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, p. 46-47; Kemal al-Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', pp. 586-87. For modern discussions of the siege, see Asbridge, The First Crusade, pp. 264-70; France, *Victory in the East*, pp. 311-14; Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare*, pp. 39-44.

> promising in return for security for their lives and property, and the establishment of a (Frankish) governor amongst them, but dissension amongst the citizens and the foreordained degree of God prevented acceptance of these terms.[20]

Internal dissension among the inhabitants themselves probably led to the offer's rejection. One must assume that at least one faction within the town hoped that a relief army would soon arrive from Ridwan of Aleppo, whose forces helped to repel Raymond Pilet's attack just four months earlier.[21] In this interpretation of events, Bohemond's discussions would be a separate set of negotiations after the walls had been captured. In this reconstruction of the events, the terms offered by Bohemond amounted to a simple case of mass ransom and profit-taking, an act which was mirrored across the township.[22]

The evidence at Ma'arrat al-Nu'man is not strong, for no Latin source repeats Ibn al-Qalanisi's information. However, the terms suggested were not dissimilar to those offered by Tancred at Tarsus 15 months earlier or to many Muslim cities in the western Mediterranean.[23] Secondly, the truce at Ma'arrat conforms to the wider pattern of diplomatic exchanges even when the siege ended violently.

Sieges and Negotiations

Agreements divide into two broad groupings. Firstly, there are individual agreements made following the collapse of the defences as a place was being

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20 Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb p. 47. Köhler, *Alliances and Treaties*, p. 41, has Raymond offering terms prior to Bohemond's arrival, but the timeframe seems too short. France, *Victory in the East*, p. 314, believes terms were agreed upon but later ignored. France's assertion is based on Kemal al-Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', p. 587, but the narrative at this point is after the breach of the walls.

21 *Gesta Francorum,* ed. & trans. R. Hill, x. 30, p. 73. On 27 July 1098, Raymond Pilet attacked the city, but he found the town "well defended by many Turks and Saracens from the city of Aleppo and from the cities and castles round about". Kemal al-Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', p. 584, says the inhabitants of Ma'arrat had issued a plea for help to Ridwan of Aleppo and Duqāq of Damascus but did not receive any.

22 Ralph of Caen, *Tancredus*, ed. E. D'Angelo p. 89; Kamal al-Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep' p. 587; Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Damascus Chronicle,* trans. H.A.R. Gibb, p. 47, mentions the defenders seeking protection from the Franks, but in the Arabic tradition they were dealt with treacherously by the Franks.

23 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, pp. 146-47.

plundered. Bohemond's dealings at Ma'arrat fall into this category.[24] However, I wish to concentrate on the second category, the collective discussions between the leaderships, a unique characteristic of sieges.

In June 1098, a Sicilian-Norman knight named Roger of Barnville was killed and beheaded before the walls of Antioch. In his obituary to Roger, Albert of Aachen praised the knight's fame that had spread to become known even among the Turks, a reputation earned due to Roger's numerous missions to obtain the 'restitutions of prisoners' or when 'arranging a truce'. This comment on Roger's career suggests that collective discussions occurred throughout a siege.[25] However, they are usually mentioned at the siege inception and critical moments, as the military power ebbed and flowed. Albara, Haifa, and Caesarea provide examples of the former in which the Latin envoys offered terms prior to the attack commencing. Terms were rejected in the last two cases, but at Albara, at least, a proportion of the town's population accepted them and departed.[26]

The siege and capture of Acre in 1104 provides a good example of the collective discussions during a siege. This was Baldwin I's second attempt at taking the city following his failure the previous year. This time Baldwin had the help of the Genoese and possibly the Pisan navies. The naval superiority allowed him to press the siege more aggressively and provided both large quantities of wood from dismantled ships and the carpentry skills to produce an array of siege machinery. Despite this impressive array of technology, the port city continued its stubborn resistance for twenty days. However, when the defences weakened and with no hope of any help from Acre's Egyptian overlord, the civic leadership asked Baldwin for a truce.

Albert of Aachen, our most informative source, describes an assembly of Acre's citizens who discussed the stark choices they faced. The citizens concluded that surrendering to Baldwin was their only option, or they would

24 See also the surrender of the rich merchants at Caeserea, recalled by Caffaro, *Annales*", ed. L.T. Belgrano, p. 12, and Tancred protection at Jerusalem, *Gesta Francorum*, ed. & trans. R. Hill, x. 38, pp. 91-92; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, vi.28, pp. 438-41.

25 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, iv. 28, p. 291. Disagreement exists regarding which side took the initiative in these discussions (see France, *Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades*; Friedman, *Encounter between Enemies*, p. 25), but there is no dispute that these discussions took place.

26 (Albara) Raymond D'Aguilers, *Le Liber*, ed. J.H. Hill and L.L. Hill, p. 73; (Haifa) 'Monk of Lido', 'Monarchi Anonymi Littorensis Historia de Translatio Sanctorum Magni Nicolai', pp. 275-78; (Caesarea) Caffaro, *Annales*, ed. L.T. Belgrano, pp. 9-10; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, vii. 55, pp. 562-65.

"perish by his weapons and, perishing, keep neither life nor city". Finally, envoys conveyed the proposed terms to Baldwin, who summoned a counsel of his advisors and his Italian allies. In the heated debate that followed, Baldwin and the Patriarch Evremar presented a simple case based on the king's military assessment of the situation and its risks. Baldwin argued that the strength of Acre's walls and its brave defenders would make a further assault a costly strategy in terms of Christian lives. The king's pragmatism encountered strong resistance from the Pisans and the Genoese because they argued the departing citizens would carry off Acre's wealth. The Italians must have thought they would not fully cover their costs under these proposed arrangements. Finally, Baldwin won the argument and the peace terms were confirmed. Later these tensions within the Christian camp would lead to loss of discipline and the slaughter of a substantial part of the city's population.[27]

These dynamics are repeated time and time again. A similar breakdown of a truce occurred at Jubayl (Byblos) in 1104 and Tripoli in 1109 but with less drastic consequences.[28] While at Tarsus, a truce was ruptured by the mistrust of the Turkish garrison, who fled during the night, killing the Franks camped outside the city's walls. This event sparked a massacre on the following day in which Baldwin, fearing for his life, hid in a tower until he was able to calm matters down.[29] These examples demonstrate the Franks' willingness to explore diplomatic moves if they reduced the risks of conducting a siege, a pragmatism well recognised in the study of warfare in Northern Europe but usually overlooked in early crusading warfare.

The siege of Jerusalem in 1099 produces the principal exception to this picture of negotiation. Jerusalem had been the subject of diplomatic activity since

27 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, ix, 28, pp. 670-75 provides a detailed account of these discussions. Other principal sources broadly confirm Albert's version, Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, ii, 25, pp. 462-64; Bartolf of Nangis, 'Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnantium', p. 537; William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, x, 27 (28), pp. 486-87; Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb pp. 61-62; Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, p. 61.

28 (Jubayl), Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, ix, 26, pp. 670-71, see n. 55 on the problems with the dating of this siege; Ibn al-Qalānisī, p. 60; William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens xi.9, pp. 507-09; Caffaro, *De liberatione civitatum Orientis*, ed. L.T. Belgrano, p. 120. (Tripoli) Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, xi. 13-14, pp. 782-87; Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, ii. 41, pp. 532-34; Ibn al-Qalānisi, trans. H.A.R. Gibb pp. 89-90; William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. Huygens xi, 10, pp. 509-10.

29 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, iii, 6, pp. 146-47.

Antioch but no evidence exists of any collective negotiations during the siege itself.[30] The crusade leadership might have considered that negotiation over the fate of the Holy City was wrong. However, they also faced more pragmatic concerns. Albert of Aachen says that the slaughter on the third day after the breach in walls was a calculated policy:

> For if we were to be attacked in great strength by the king of Egypt we should be suddenly overcome from inside and outside the city, and in this way carried into eternal exile. And so the most important and trustworthy advice seems to us that all Saracens and gentiles who are held prisoner for ransoming with money, or already redeemed, should be put to the sword without delay.[31]

The execution of all the prisoners, including women and children, occurred through fear of the advancing Fatimid army and the multitude of potential fifth columnists held captive within the walls of the city. The exchange of embassies remained unfavourable to both sides. The Fatimid garrison knew help was a few miles away while the Franks remained fearful that time was not on their side.

Even at Jerusalem, diplomacy finally played a part in the surrender of the Tower of David – the city's citadel. Literary and archaeological sources attest to the strength of this structure, an observation true of other citadels across the region.[32] The sword alone rarely overcame citadels during this period. For example, at Al-Atharib in 1110, Tancred considered the prospects of trying to launch an assault on the fortress's citadel too risky and agreed to terms. The evidence suggests that even when the outer wall had crumbled, words – not the sword – secured the last bastion of resistance.[33]

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30 The diplomatic contact with the Isma'ili Fatimid of Egypt explored the possibility of an alliance against the Seljuk of Syria. A Latin embassy departed to Egypt after the capture of Nicaea. A Fatimid embassy followed and arrived at Antioch in early February, staying several weeks. The ownership of Jerusalem was central to these discussions. France, *Victory in the East,* pp. 251-53; Dajani-Shakeel, 'Diplomatic Relations Between Muslim and Frankish Rulers 1097-1153 AD', pp. 190-215.

31 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, vi.29, p. 440-41.

32 Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time of the Crusades*, pp. 73-78.

33 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, 11.44, pp. 820-21. On the citadels' potential to resist, see Zouache, *Armées et Combats en Syrie de 491/1098 à 569/1174*, p. 515.

Muslim Experience

I now want to turn to the second group of sieges ignored by the traditional historiography: the Muslim-instigated sieges. At the beginning of the twelfth century, the Muslims were politically fragmented and on the defensive. However, this disunity did not result in military inertia. From the time of the Franks' arrival into northern Syria to 1131, the Muslim powers conducted 43 sieges. This cross section has three characteristics worthy of comment. Firstly, the Muslims' approach to siege warfare was similar to that of the Franks' although the tactics varied. For example, the Muslims rarely employed siege towers despite their knowledge of the technology. During the early twelfth century, Muslim siege tactics centred on a combination of assaults and undermining the walls.[34] Despite these tactical differences, negotiations were still preferred to the assault, with 40 per cent of sieges concluding by truce. Secondly, in their sieges against the Franks, the Muslim powers were less successful; half of their efforts ended in defeat. The most common reason given for raising a siege was the arrival of a Frankish relief army and the unwillingness of the Muslim commander to commit his forces to open battle. Throughout this early period, the Franks' ability to concentrate their resources and Muslim fear of Frankish field armies proved decisive.[35] Lastly, the Muslims conducted about a third of their sieges against their co-religionists. The desire to dominate their Muslim rivals often proved more tempting than overcoming Christian strongholds. This last feature provides an opportunity to compare sieges fought within a single cultural group with those between two different cultures. The latter are often considered more violent, due to the lack of shared cultural assumptions about conflict.[36]

In the sieges against their fellow Muslims, only two sieges, Mosul in 1108 and Hama in 1115, ended in a successful assault against the defences.[37] Against the Franks, the taking of a city by sword was more common although the incidence – about one in five – was comparable to Frankish sieges. Are these differences indicative of increased violence generated by holy war? While pro-

34 Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles*, p. 217; Nicolle, *Crusader Warfare*, pp. 238-39; Hillenbrand, *The Crusades*, pp. 531-32.

35 Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles*, pp. 203-08.

36 Morillo, 'A General Typology of Transcultural Warfare', pp. 29-42.

37 (Mosul) Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, p. 83; Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn Al–Athir*, part 1, trans. D.S. Richards, pp. 136-37. The assault was aided by discontents within who opened the gates to the besiegers. (Hama) Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn Al–Athir*, part 1, trans. D.S. Richards, p. 172; Walter the Chancellor, *Bella Antiochena*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer i, 1.3, p. 68.

vocative, this query is based solely on numerical frequency, with no broader context. To better understand these patterns, the career of Zengi, regarded by many historians as the first great Muslim counter-crusader and a man with a fearsome reputation for conquest and cruelty, can help to draw out the narrative behind this violence.

Zengi

Imad al-Din Zengi became governor of Mosul in 1127 and secured control of Aleppo the following year. However, his most famous conquest was his successful siege of Edessa in 1144, which became the first of the Frankish capitals in Outremer to fall back into Muslim hands. The legacy of this conquest enhanced Zengi's reputation as a champion of Islam although nearly all his campaigns were directed against Muslim powers of North Syria and the Jazria. Surviving into his sixties, he is portrayed as a strong military leader who was often cruel and ruthless, but one who was quick to exploit an opportunity.[38]

Zengi conducted over two dozen documented sieges, a figure that omits a large number of smaller conquests that gained little attention from the chroniclers.[39] The majority of these sieges (60 per cent) ended within a few days. The longest and most intensive sieges occurred against his co-religionists for the control of the great Syrian cities of Homs, Hama, and Damascus. His attacks against the Franks were both opportunistic and shorter. Even his ultimate achievement, as a warrior of *jihad* – the conquest of Edessa – conforms to this pattern. Here Zengi took advantage of the absence of Edessa's ruler, Joscelin II, to pounce on the city.[40] Based on frequency and commitment of resources, Zengi's obsidional interests centred on his Muslim rivals.

In his dealings with the Franks, despite his reputation, Zengi used negotiation when it aligned with his ambitions. He underpinned his first forays against his Muslim adversaries by agreeing to a truce with Joscelin II of Edessa.[41] In the narrower environment of siege warfare, negotiations played an important

38 On Zengi's career, character, and role in the 'counter-crusades', Hillenbrand, 'Abominable Acts', pp. 111-32; Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, vol. 2, pp. 293-388; Alptekin, 'The Reign of Zangi'.

39 Zengi's campaign against the Kurds is poorly covered in the sources, being no more than a list of obscure or unknown fortresses. Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, p. 307, provides one of the fullest commentaries of these events.

40 Medieval Muslim historians portray the siege as a deliberate strategy although modern interpretations of events see it as an opportunistic venture, Hillenbrand, 'Abominable Acts', pp. 118-19; Cobb, *The Race for Paradise*, pp. 134-35.

41 Cobb, *The Race for Paradise*, p. 128.

role in his tactical armoury. At Barin (Montferrand) in 1137, he agreed to a truce knowing that a Frankish relief army was on the way, a truce that would leave him both richer and in control of the fortress.[42] Even in his most famous siege at Edessa, Zengi pursued a diplomatic solution rather than risk an assault. In the early phases of the siege, the city faced both blockade and bombardment. During this period, Zengi sent a proposal of peace stating that *"he wished a surrender that the town should not be destroyed and the inhabitants killed."* He wanted an intact asset but his overtures came to nothing.[43] After the outer defences were destroyed, he again attempted to negotiate with the survivors in the citadel, endeavouring to divide the various Christian sects within the city to his own advantage.[44] Finally, after two days the survivors, on the promise of their lives, handed the citadel over to Zengi and Edessa fell.

However, cultural differences and distrust hindered truce-making. Muslim and Christian shared neither a common language nor the same rituals and protocols, so peace-making was always fraught with difficulties. Interpreters were evident from the First Crusade, but to learn and understand the various different traditions such as gift-giving and diplomatic etiquette would take time. In the meantime, this lack of understanding fuelled the natural distrust between the two faiths, increasing the difficulty. Against this background, peacemaking was precarious between the two faiths, but it remained the most cost-effective means of conquest.[45]

Conversely, Zengi had a wider set of options to secure his victories with his co-religionists. Marriages made truces secure and provide the victor legitimacy. The city of Homs, an object of Zengi's ambitions since the early 1130s, was secured after several aborted sieges by a marriage with a Burid princess.[46] Other possibilities arose by utilising relatives and friends in negotiating an end to hostilities. In his final and fatal siege, Zengi employed a close friend of the fortress's emir to negotiate and agree on terms.[47] Lastly, Zengi had a greater

42 William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens xiv, 25-29, pp. 663-670; Kamal al Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', pp. 672-73 Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, pp. 336-37; al-Azimi, 'La Chronique Abreege d'al-Azimi', trans. C. Cahen, p. 138.

43 'Anonymous Syriac Chronicle', trans. A.S. Tritton & H.A.R. Gibb, pp. 282-83.

44 Gregory the Priest, 'Continuation by Gregory the Priest', trans. A.E. Dostourian, pp. 243-44.

45 Friedman, 'Gestures of Conciliation', pp. 31-48.

46 Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, p. 252; Köhler, *Alliances and Treaties*, p. 140; Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, vol. 2, pp. 366-67. In 1128 Zengi had earlier secured his position in Aleppo by marrying into the ruling Seljuq family, and in 1134 he again employed a marriage to help him consolidate his conquest against the Kurds.

47 Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, pp. 380-81.

choice of arrangements to end the fighting. Most cross-cultural sieges ended with the inhabitants departing, usually with their moveable property, or if they remained, a tax was imposed. In these settlements the rulers had no place in the fortification's future. Zengi's sieges against his co-religionists produced varied settlements, which embraced the future of the rulers and their elites. In 1134, the new ruler al-Rabiyya used his uncles, warriors in his entourage, to gain Zengi's acknowledgement of his inheritance rather than face possible military action.[48] In 1139, Zengi offered other cities to the sickly ruler of Damascus in compensation for that city, a gesture he later clarified by naming the cities of Ba'albek and Homs. The Damascenes rejected Zengi's overtures, but such moves were common.[49] These confirmations and exchanges were not unknown to the Franks as most can be found in the Western warfare. However, the religious, cultural, and linguistic gaps between Christians and Muslims made such settlements at best difficult and in the case of marriage impossible.

Several incidences of breaking his word marred Zengi's reputation and hindered his ambitions. The earliest occurred in 1130 when he acted treacherously against two of his allies. In the first incident, he seized the son of the ruler of Damascus along with most of the Hama garrison, who had been sent to him under a promise of protection, to aid him in fighting the Franks. Following this act of treachery, he marched on and took Hama, a key city in the upper Orontes. Following the submission of Hama, he besieged Homs, arresting and torturing its emir who was in his entourage to force the city into submission. In this case, Zengi's double-cross failed and he raised the siege.[50] Nine years later, at Baalbek, the garrison surrendered on Zengi's solemn oath of protection. Again Zengi went back on his word and had the city's governor flayed alive and the rest of the garrison hung. In this last episode, it was not Zengi's cruelty to his fellow Muslims that earned him rebuke, but the breaking of his word.[51] This untrustworthiness would later cost Zengi his greatest prize, Damascus. Here in 1139, the city's leading men dismissed his envoys, fearing that he might lie to them as he had to the men of Baalbek.[52]

48 Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, p. 308. Later Zengi allowed a rival emir to attack the new ruler who seized al-Rabiyya, providing Zengi with an opportunity, despite his sadness over these events, to take the rest of the castles.

49 Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, pp. 257-62; Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, pp. 352-53; Kamal al-Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', pp. 681-82.

50 Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, pp. 200-02; Kamal al Din, 'Extracts de la Chronique d'Alep', pp. 659-60.

51 Ibn al-Qalānisī, *The Damascus Chronicle*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, pp. 254-56.

52 Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al–Athir*, trans. D.S. Richards, p. 249 & 352; Köhler, *Alliances and Treaties*, p. 143.

Oaths

The importance of a man's oath is evident in Frankish negotiations. At Acre, after the unprompted massacre, Baldwin I became enraged by the injustice done to his character. He remained unconcerned at the many innocent dead who lay throughout the city, but was incensed by the thought that other rulers might believe that he had violated an agreed-upon truce as some trick to take the city.[53] While ruses and tricks were permitted – even expected – violating an oath was not. A reputation for keeping your word provided a potentially quick route to military success. At Ascalon in 1099, after the defeat of the Fatimid army, the city intended to surrender to Raymond of Toulouse as he had kept his word with the garrison of Jerusalem.[54]

The clearest expression of the oath's importance comes from Tancred's discussions near Kafalata. The town had surrendered to Tancred but the citizens questioned Tancred's honour and asked him undertake a more formal oath. An angry Tancred at first considered killing the population. However, he reflected that such an action might look like a betrayal of his word, and in the future no fortress would then trust him to conclude a peace. The same passage Abi Tayyi concluded with a story of an escaped slave girl. The girl had taken refuge in al-Atharib but upon the city's surrender her former owner, a knight in Tancred's army, tried to seize her back. An annoyed Tancred turned on the luckless knight and confiscated his horse and goods as punishment, proclaiming to the assembled Franks that he want his treaties respected.[55] No doubt this story merges fact and fiction but it shows an awareness of the importance of keeping one's word in shaping reputations.

Conclusion

The traditional historiography does not produce a false picture but a distorted one in which assaults, technology, and atrocities are given too much prominence. The wider view incorporating the mundane and Muslim sieges does not eradicate this picture because sieges were undeniably horrible experiences.

53 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, ix.29, pp. 674-75.

54 Ralph of Caen, *Tancredus*, ed. E. D'Angelo, pp. 116-7; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. & trans. S.B. Edgington, pp. 470-71. Ralph and Albert disagree over Raymond's action after the battle of Ascalon. Ralph says the people raised his banners, a sign of submission, as he was widely celebrated among the people for keeping his word. Albert casts Raymond trying to spoil Godfrey of Bouillon's ambitions.

55 Eddé, 'Francs et Musulmans de Syrie', pp. 164-66.

However, these smaller sieges highlight diplomacy's importance as a tactic in siege warfare. Neither race nor faith seemed to hinder the willingness to conclude a truce. The principal problem did not involve the granting of terms but the fragility of their implementation. Against this background, martial reputations remained important; people had to believe that a leader might make good on his threat. In this environment, a reputation for cruelty was not an adverse attribute because it improved one's negotiating position. However, these sieges demonstrate that a reputation for martial prowess was of little use if the individual was tainted with a reputation for oath-breaking.

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PART 4

Military Literature

CHAPTER 12

Late Byzantine Elites and Military Literature: Authors, Readers and Manuscripts (*c.*1050-*c.*1450)*

Philip Rance

Byzantium was heir to a tradition of Greek and Roman military literature stretching back to the fourth century BC. This had always been a broad genre, ranging in scope from general compendia to specialist monographs, and encompassing prescriptive handbooks for military operations on land and sea, technological blueprints for siege machinery, collections of exemplary historical stratagems, and ethical-literary manuals for gentlemen who aspired to be generals. These works exhibit a diversity of content, style, language and approach reflective of different categories of author and audience. Byzantine intellectual and literary activity in this field is manifest in two complementary strands of scholarship – the collection, editing and adaptation of surviving texts from classical antiquity and the composition of numerous new military treatises. The genre appears to have flourished in the sixth and especially tenth centuries, coinciding with periods of intensive warfare and imperial expansion. Although this periodization is less tidy than is often portrayed, particularly with respect to the intervening 'Dark Age', the terminal date of Byzantine military literature seems secure inasmuch as the *Taktika* of Nikephoros Ouranos, a vast compendium of military science compiled *c.*1000, is conventionally acknowledged as the last and certainly the longest representative of this literary tradition.[1]

This short study will attempt to trace the subsequent and more obscure fate of this genre in the late Byzantine period, *c.*1050 to *c.*1450, an era of near-continuous warfare, but ultimately of decline and dismemberment, in which Byzantium was transformed from a transcontinental empire into a city-state

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1 E.g. Dain/de Foucault, 'Stratégistes', pp. 371-3; Hunger, *Literatur*, vol. 2, pp. 337-8; McGeer, 'Military Texts', p. 913; Sullivan, 'Military Manuals', pp. 159-60.

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with overseas territories. In addition to surveying military-related works written during these four centuries, I will to try to identify the late Byzantine audience(s), distribution and milieu of military texts, as reflected in aristocratic education and literary culture and inferred from manuscript production and ownership.

The subject calls for some initial caveats. While Byzantine writers, editors and readers recognized a tradition of military writing, connecting 'ancient' and 'recent' authors, diversity within this genre complicates attempts at generalisation, especially when the late Byzantine evidence is fragmentary and chronologically uneven. Recent studies have exposed some of the obstacles to delimiting generic boundaries and elucidated the different educational, sociocultural and literary contexts in which military texts were written, copied and read beyond their purely military dimensions.[2] More generally, determining the consumers of any literature inevitably entails impressionistic interpretations, even if the empire's longer-term territorial shrinkage may facilitate identification of likely suspects. The late Byzantine military elite, especially after *c.*1204, embraced a diminishing number of interrelated aristocratic clans, who shared a common identity, culture and ethos, and largely monopolised army commands, but the difficulty of defining a broader 'officer class', together with the overlapping and partly artificial categorisations of 'military' and 'civilian' elites, and the increasingly multi-ethnic composition of late Byzantine forces, caution against assumptions of a static or monolithic military or military-literary culture.[3] Limitations of space and a relative dearth of previous scholarship permit only a preliminary survey of the field and a provisional classification of the kinds of evidence that may assist in answering these questions. Full exploitation of that evidence must await a later occasion

Military Treatises Written *c.*1050-*c.*1450

Four treatises with substantial or exclusively military content are known to have been composed in this period. Two are extant, one is entirely lost and another partly survives in translation.

2 E.g. Roueché, 'Admonitory Tradition'; Shawcross, "Do Thou Nothing", pp. 98-105, 112-18.

3 Bartusis, *Late Byzantine Army*, pp. 241-6; Kyriakidis, *Warfare*, pp. 45-73, 210-14.

Kekaumenos, Strategikon (c.*1075-8*)

By far the best-known work is an unascribed '*Strategikon*', composed *c.*1075-8, seemingly by a member of the Kekaumenos family.[4] His identity, ancestry and career have generated an extensive bibliography, but detailed arguments are of no immediate concern. He was apparently of Armeno-Georgian descent, with forebears accustomed to military command, and had himself held high military office; if not a provincial magnate then a propertied gentleman with rural estates near the northeastern margins of the empire.[5] The treatise is incompletely preserved in a single, often defective fourteenth-century codex, *Mosquensis synodalis gr.* 298 (*Vlad.* 436) (fols. 136v-229r). The transmitted text descends from an exemplar that was already acephalous, lacunose and perhaps disarranged when an anterior editor(s) affixed a short prologue, based on his own inferences, and inserted numbered subdivisions and a pinax. The title (or description) in the manuscript is also due to this editor, possibly inspired by a passage in which the author describes his treatise (or a section thereof) as 'a *strategikon*' (19.23-4), in the middle Byzantine period a generic designation for any text or manuscript with military content.[6] While this label may reflect the author's and/or editor's categorisation of the work, most modern commentators have preferred *Consilia et Narrationes* or analogous titles, as more accurately conveying its combination of advice and anecdote. In any case, it is not a military treatise in a traditional sense, but belongs to a distinct if partially overlapping category of moralising advisory literature addressed to rulers, aristocrats, officials and/or relatives.

The extant text seems to incorporate three distinct compositions of unequal length, supplemented by miscellanea. In the largest component (1.1-76.15) Kekaumenos advises his sons on such diverse matters as holding civil and military office, estate and household management, family life and friendships, relations with local authorities and communities, and appropriate conduct in the event of a revolt against the emperor, with particular concern for loyalty and reputation. The other two elements, though arguably displaced from their original positions, are now generally considered to be by same author. One offers guidance to a *toparchēs* or semi-autonomous ruler in a frontier zone

4 The most authoritative and accessible edition is now Roueché, *Kekaumenos*, with English translation and commentary. I followed Roueché in citing page/line numbers in B.[V.] Wassiliewsky and V. Jernstedt (edd.), *Cecaumeni strategicon* (St. Petersburg 1896) as a common system of reference. The commentary in Litavrin, *Кекавмен,* remains valuable.

5 Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, pp. 19-56; Spadaro, *Cecaumeno*, pp. 7-11; Roueché, *Kekaumenos* §IV.

6 Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, pp. 8-12, 18; Spadaro, *Cecaumeno*, pp. 11-15; Roueché, *Kekaumenos* §II.1-3.

(76.16-80.6), the other to a generic emperor with regard to imperial governance and defence (93.1-104.19). The former is without parallel, the latter resembles a *consilium principis*.[7] Overall, less than a quarter of the surviving text concerns the exercise of military command, including judicial, administrative and fiscal responsibilities (9.4-36.9). In this section Kekaumenos focuses on the role of a field commander, whether a general (*strategos*), first on campaign in hostile territory (9.7-18.24), then within the jurisdiction of his own *thema* (18.25-21.10), specifically one on the imperial periphery (21.11-24.21), or a frontier officer (*akritēs*) responsible for sectoral defence (24.22-35.18). Kekaumenos mostly rehearses conventional Byzantine concerns, in a sometimes repetitive or disorganised fashion – spying and reconnaissance; the merits of indirect warfare based on combat-avoidance, ruses and deception; siting encampments and security; administration of justice, and the professional, personal and moral qualities of an ideal general, including religious piety. He illustrates his advice with short historical narratives and anecdotes, ancient and recent, some of which record his own or relatives' experience. These exempla are more numerous, detailed and closely integrated into the discussion than is usually the case in Byzantine military treatises, in which collections of 'stratagemic' excerpta, often adaptions of Greco-Roman anthologies, are typically a self-contained sub-genre or consigned to appendices.[8]

Kekaumenos' written sources include family documents, at least one gnomic *florilegium*, biblical-patristic and historical works, and military handbooks. His familiarity with Byzantine and possibly classical military literature, together with his conception of his own work's place within that tradition, is variously intimated in allusions to unspecified 'ancient' or 'previous' writers (10.23-4, 11.19-25, 13.3-8, 14.1-3, 15.14-17, 16.15-18), general remarks on the importance of reading as intellectual preparation (19.13-23, 47.14-22), and apparent parallels with the language and content of earlier military texts, notably Leo's *Taktika* (*c*.900). Even if these cannot prove his firsthand acquaintance with particular works, he had evidently read examples of this genre and advised others to do so. References to prior authorities accrue in the first half of his treatment of generalship, whereas the second is more personal and anecdotal in tone and content.[9] In addition, Kekaumenos differentiates the advice he offers from other sources of knowledge (19.23-7):

7 Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, pp. 5-8, 12-19; Spadaro, *Cecaumeno*, pp. 29-31; Roueché, 'Admonitory Tradition', p. 131-3

8 Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, pp. 56-77.

9 Roueché, 'Literary background', pp. 113-28.

> I drew together for you these things that are not in any other book of generalship nor in any other book (ταῦτα μὴ ὄντα εἰς ἄλλο στρατηγικὸν μηδὲ εἰς ἄλλο βιβλίον) – for I drew them together from my own deliberation and from real experience (ἐξ ἀληθινῆς πείρας); for they will benefit you greatly. Follow too the stratagems of the ancients (τὰς τῶν ἀρχαίων στρατηγίας); you will not find these things there, but you will find other, better things that are marvellous and full of wisdom.

The distinction he draws is ill-defined, and perhaps partly disingenuous, but his appeal to 'real experience' – personal, familial and/or historical – is consistent with his recommendation of ancient precepts not as fixed doctrine but as a basis for empirical adaptation and innovation (13.3-10, 16.18-19). If Kekaumenos aimed to offer his own selective supplement to older writings, this would account for the qualitative unevenness of his treatise. He thus explicitly eschews exposition of those more technical subjects that form the primary interest of Byzantine military authors – for example, on battle deployment and siegecraft he simply directs readers to existing literature, which he deems both easily accessible and sufficient (10.23-8, 16.15-19). In contrast, his more specific and less derivative treatment of procedures and machinery required to defend a frontier fortress (*kastron*) perhaps reflects firsthand knowledge or parochial interests (30.27-35.18).

Questions of genre, mentalité and audience persist. Roueché's sophisticated evaluation of Kekaumenos' work has recently located its form, interests and readers within the tradition of Byzantine admonitory literature, typified by collections of apophthegmata, fabulae and maxims, both moral and practical. She observes that Greco-Roman and Byzantine military literature had always accommodated a gnomic tradition, most evident in Maurice's *Strategikon* VIII and Leo's *Taktika* XX, while in turn some Byzantine moral and didactic compositions, such as the *Spaneas* (twelfth century) and George Lapithes' verses (*c.*1340s), touch upon military responsibilities as part of their guidance on gentlemanly conduct.[10] One could add instances in which a military treatise is apparently a source for a general didactic-rhetorical anthology.[11] An author's address to his son(s) is a rhetorical convention of admonitory texts, but this need not preclude the possibility of an authentic domestic context for Kekaumenos' treatise, even if it was also or primarily intended for a wider readership

10 Roueché, 'Rhetoric'; 'Admonitory Tradition'; 'Literary background', pp. 114-17.

11 E.g. *Sylloge Tacticorum* 95.4, ed. A. Dain (Paris 1938), appears to be the source for *Mantissa proverbiorum* 2.82, ed. E.L. von Leutsch/F.G. Schneidewin, *Corpus paroemiographorum Graecorum* (Göttingen 1838-51), vol. 2, p. 771.

of other quasi-independent frontier commanders.[12] Such a literary-cultural milieu is supported by analysis of the date, genre, provenance and textual affinities of the other works transmitted in *Mosq. synod. gr*. 298, which suggests that the archetype of this fourteenth-century manuscript was a private collection of advisory and utilitarian works first assembled in eastern Asia Minor in the late eleventh century, and thus shortly after Kekaumenos wrote.[13] The form and content of Kekaumenos' '*Strategikon*', and in particular its treatment of generalship (i.e. the office of general) as one aspect of aristocratic *paideia*, along with his avoidance of technical-technological content and his use of exemplary anecdotes, mean that the treatise is usually excluded from surveys of Byzantine military literature,[14] but it is perhaps better to view these features as a broadening or loosening of the generic boundaries of Greek 'practical' writing in this period.

***Michael Psellos,* Περὶ πολεμικῆς συντάξεως (*c.1050s-70s*)**

Ostensibly written around the same time as Kekaumenos' *Strategikon*, but differing entirely in literary form and tradition, is a tactical opusculum entitled *Περὶ πολεμικῆς συντάξεως*, *On military deployment*, ascribed in most manuscripts to Michael Psellos (1018-*c.*1081), the distinguished scholar, courtier and statesman.[15] This short tract is an adaptation of Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria*, written *c.*106-13, a survey of the terminology, structure and manoeuvres of an idealised army, drawing on a late Hellenistic tradition of tactical writing. Although Ailianos expressly intended his treatise as an antiquarian exercise for the edification of Trajan (r. 98-117), it became one of the most influential works of Greco-Roman tactical literature and was already a fashionable military 'classic' for Byzantine readers (see below). Psellos' severely abridged epitome effectively reduces Ailianos' text to a lexicon of arcane *termini technici*, potentially of literary-historical or didactic value, but without obvious practical utility. The only novel element is Psellos' opinion, asserted at the beginning, middle and end (1, 12, 17), that a 'philosopher', apparently the projected reader, should understand and practice this art (τέχνη), albeit as a non-combatant. The text has attracted negligible interest from scholars of Psellos. In the absence of

12 Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, pp. 18-19, 95-100; Spadaro, *Cecaumeno*, pp. 15-29; Roueché, 'Literary background', pp. 128-36.

13 Fonkič, 'О рукописи', pp. 108-20; McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, pp. 3-7; Litavrin, *Кекавмен*, pp. 11-35; Roueché, 'Admonitory Tradition', pp. 134-44.

14 E.g. explicitly Dain/de Foucault, 'Stratégistes', p. 373; Hunger, *Literatur*, vol. 2, pp. 337-8.

15 See brief remarks in Dain/de Foucault, 'Stratégistes', p. 374 (with errors); Hunger, *Literatur*, vol. 2, p. 338.

counterarguments, the ascription is accepted here. As Psellos wrote prolifically on diverse topics, this tract may reflect his polymathic range rather than specifically military interests, though this does not exclude the possibility of more narrowly locating *Περὶ πολεμικῆς συντάξεως* within his role as an imperial tutor, historian or 'philosopher'. Certainly Psellos knew and valued Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria* as a canonical text in the education of the military elite (see below). Furthermore, in an especially immodest passage of his *Chronographia*, he alleges that even the emperor, Romanos IV (r. 1068-71), admired and envied him because "I had most thoroughly investigated the science of tactics (τὴν τακτικὴν ἐπιστήμην ἠκριβωκότα) and everything pertaining to files and formations, and to the construction of machines, and the capture of cities, and all other matters relating to the rules of generalship".[16] Perhaps more significantly, though the relevant linguistic analysis is lacking, a preliminary examination of military episodes in Psellos' historical and rhetorical works reveals instances of Hellenistic tactical jargon that are most plausibly explained by his own reading of Ailianos.[17]

There are three manuscript prototypes of *Περὶ πολεμικῆς συντάξεως*.[18] Thirteenth-century *Parisinus gr*. 1182 (fols. 106v-107r) and fourteenth-century *Vaticanus gr*. 671 (fols. 97r-98v) transmit the text within large Psellian corpora, and its copying thus reflects no criteria beyond inclusion in '*opera omnia*'. In contrast, in *Constantinopolitanus gr.* 19 (fols. 330v-332r), compiled *c.*1410-20, the text occurs independently alongside diverse 'scientific' works, including other tactical treatises. In this manuscript the text bears no indication of authorship; catalogued by Deissmann (1933) as anonymous, it remained largely unrecognised until Moraux and Reinsch published the results of their autopsy (1976).[19] The text in *Parisinus gr*. 1182 was published by Boissonade (1838) and thence reprinted by Köchly and Rüstow (1855). Boissonade's misreading (or

16 Psellos, *Chronographia* 7.137 (b 16).

17 E.g. ἡμιλοχίτης, 'half-fileleader', at Psellos, *Chronographia* 1.32, 7.24; cf. Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria* 5.2 (= Psellos, *Περὶ πολεμικῆς συντάξεως* 3). See also e.g. Psellos, *Oratio* 8, lines 38-50, ed. A.R. Littlewood, *Michaelis Pselli oratoria minora*, Leipzig 1985. I shall examine this lexical influence in a separate study.

18 Moore, *Iter Psellianum*, p. 416 [Nº 1023].

19 Deissmann, *Forschungen*, p. 63: '… eines, wie es scheint, anonymen taktischen Werkes'. Exceptionally, the text was recognised by Dain, *Histoire*, p. 332; Dain/de Foucault, 'Stratégistes', p. 374 (with errors). For *Constantinop. gr.* 19 see Dain, *Histoire*, pp. 329-42; Moraux et al., *Aristoteles Graecus*, pp. 373-5.

emendation?) of συντάξεως as τάξεως in the title is reproduced in all subsequent scholarship.[20] The present author is preparing a new edition.

***Michael Doukas Glabas Tarchaneiotes, a Lost Work* (*c.*1297-1305/8)**

Glabas (*c.*1235-*c.*1305/8) was an eminent general under Michael VIII (r. 1261-82) and Andronikos II (r. 1272-1328). Over a forty-year period from *c.*1262 to 1304, he fought extensive campaigns throughout the Balkans – against Bulgarians, Angevins and Serbs – often with limited resources, ultimately attaining the dignity of *protostrator*. He and his wife, Maria, were also renowned for literary and artistic patronage and ecclesiastical endowments, most famously their renovation of the monastic Church of the Pammakaristos, where they were buried.[21] If overall his martial success was variable, the longevity of his career points to enduring imperial confidence, and contemporary historians exalt his generalship: Gregoras claims Glabas "was so practised in military experience that generals of the time were deemed children in comparison to him".[22] The existence of his lost military work is known solely through an epigram, which once served as its verse preface, composed by Manuel Philes, a prolific professional poet who wrote copious dedicatory verses for the Constantinopolitan court and aristocracy, including other commissions from Glabas and/or his wife.[23] The epigram is uniquely preserved in a collection of Philes' poetry in the fifteenth-century *Taurinensis gr*. C.VII 7 (fols. 190v-191r). The lemma reads Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὸ βιβλίον, ὃ συντέταχεν ὁ πρωτοστράτωρ ἐκεῖνος ὁ Γλαβᾶς ἐν διαφόροις κεφαλαίοις στρατηγικοῖς, "Epigram on the book which the noted *protostrator* Glabas has compiled on various topics of generalship". It is unclear whether this heading is authorial or the inference of a later editor or lemmatist. Given the obscurity of the epigram's only prior publication (1896), its 46

20 Boissonade, *Ψέλλος*, pp. 120-24, 318; Köchly/Rüstow, *Griechische Kriegsschriftsteller*, II.2, pp. 234-8. My autopsy of *Par. gr*. 1182 (fol. 106v) confirms the reading συντάξεως found in the other two witnesses.

21 Glabas' career: Theocharides, 'Ταρχανειώτης', pp. 191-202; Belting et al., *Pammakaristos*, pp. 11-19; Trapp et al., *PLP* Nr. 27504, 27511; Leontiades, *Tarchaneiotai*, pp. 69-72, 78-9; Effenberger, 'Restaurierungstätigkeit', pp. 79-80.

22 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Historia*, eds. L. Schopen/I. Bekker (Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 4, 9, 48), 3 vols., Bonn 1829-55, vol. 1, p. 159, lines 9-11: … ἐς στρατηγικὴν ἐμπειρίαν ἐξησκημένῳ τοσοῦτον, ὡς παῖδας νομίζεσθαι τοὺς τότε στρατηγοὺς παραβαλλομένους αὐτῷ; also George Pachymeres, *Historia*, ed. I. Bekker, vol. 2, p. 445, lines 14-15: 'a man Ares-like and experienced in war (ἄνδρα Ἀρεϊκὸν μὲν καὶ ἐμπειροπόλεμον)'.

23 Belting et al., *Pammakaristos*, pp. 15-19; with references assembled in Leontiades, *Tarchaneiotai*, pp. 69-72, 78-9.

lines are reproduced and translated in an appendix below.[24] Few facts can be gleaned from these verses in celebration of the general's military career and writings. As Glabas is accorded the title *protostrator* (2), a dignity he acquired after 1297 and by 1302/3, the composition must belong to the final decade of his life. The last third of the epigram (29-46), in places obscurely worded, introduces Glabas' son-in-law Andronikos, a 'nephew' (ἀδελφιδοῦς) of an unnamed emperor. Philes' use of the present tense (ἀρθροῖ) in reference to this marriage (35) probably reflects metrical considerations rather than contemporaneity.[25] The secondary literature harbours disagreement regarding the identity of the husband, but *communis opinio* favours Andronikos Komnenos Branas Doukas Angelos Palaiologos (*c.*1262-post-1310), a nephew of Michael VIII, even if the poem thus refers to a long-dead emperor rather than the incumbent, Andronikos II. The literary interests of this princeling are otherwise attested or inferred.[26] While the relevance of this relationship to Glabas' military treatise is now elusive, the poem clearly seeks to advertise the general's marital union to the Palaiologan dynasty.[27] Beyond these prosopographical details, the interpretative difficulties of encomiastic verse prevail. Vocabulary and syntax are partly constrained by the duodecasyllablic metre, while Philes' praise of Glabas' treatise is too banal to reveal anything about its form and content or to warrant face-value acceptance. If caution were required, one need only note that the two extant Byzantine military texts to be furnished with prefatory epigrams – Urbikios' *Taktikon* (491-518) and a *Naumachika* addressed to Basil the Parakoimomenos (*c.*959), both more inflated in their claims – rank among the most jejune and derivative opuscula of the genre.

In these circumstances, evidence for Glabas' other literary endeavours is potentially instructive. The general is known to have also written a work on theology. This too is lost and again known only through a surviving prefatory epigram by Philes. Its lemma reads: Περὶ τῶν τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ πρωτοστράτορος

24 The only published version is to be found in Martini, 'poesia inedita', pp. 470-71.

25 See Philes' placement of ἀρθροῖ in the same trimeter in e.g. *Carmina*, ed. Martini, Nº 65 (v. 45), 90 (v. 25).

26 E.g. Martini, 'poesia inedita', pp. 464-5; Belting et al., *Pammakaristos*, pp. 17; Trapp et al., *PLP* Nr. 21439, 27504, 27511; Leontiades, *Tarchaneiotai*, pp. 72, 79, 135. Alternatively Theocharides, 'Ταρχανειώτης', pp. 202-3; Polemis, *Doukai*, pp. 104 (Nº 67), 121 (Nº 89), 161-2 (Nº 150) identify Andronikos Palaiologos Komnenos Asanes (*c.*1280-post-1351), a nephew of Andronikos II by his sister Eirene (= Trapp et al., *PLP* Nr. 1489). In any case, the supposition of Martini (p. 465 n. 1) that 'l'epigramma stesso fosse scritto vivente ancora Michele Paleologo' is untenable.

27 Polemis, *Doukai*, p. 121 (Nº 89) seems to infer that Andronikos acted as a kind of literary executor for his father-in-law.

κεφαλαίων, ἅπερ ἀπὸ τῆς θείας γραφῆς ἠρανίσατο, "On the topics of the marvellous *protostrator*, which he collected from sacred writing". In this instance, however, the poet clarifies that the work in question was little more than a catena of exegetical extracts that Glabas had culled from the works of the Church Fathers and Byzantine theologians, whom Philes identifies and lists.[28] Glabas' stated rank and a subsequent allusion to bodily infirmity indicate that this work was also written late in life.[29] Recent scholarship has argued that Byzantine writers and readers viewed the production of literary and gnomic florilegia as a more creative editorial process than their cut-and-paste, compilatory format might imply.[30] The formality of a book epigram correspondingly evokes the tradition-conscious pride and cultural status that could be attached to a work deemed of intrinsic value. Nevertheless, if the reported form and content of his theological anthology is an accurate measure of Glabas' literary abilities, one can legitimately suspect that his military work was, likewise, not a lost monument of Byzantine tactical theory, but an excerpt collection. Although not decisive in this respect, the lemmata of both epigrams share the notion of diverse 'topics' (κεφάλαια) that the *protostrator* has 'assembled' or 'arranged'. While broader cultural contexts cannot be explored here, the commissioning of a book epigram suggests that the very act of writing a military text, regardless of its character or quality, could be testament to professional or intellectual credentials. Glabas' lost military treatise, written near or in retirement, would thus have been one dimension of a nexus of literary-artistic patronage, which in his case included narration of his campaigns in both an extant verse panegyric and a lost fresco cycle, whereby the late Byzantine military aristocracy sought to publicize achievements and secure reputations.[31]

Theodore Palaiologos, Enseignements (*1326*)

In the case of Theodore Palaiologos (1291/2-1338) a most tenuous textual transmission exacerbates difficulties of generic classification. The second son of Andronikos II (r. 1272-1328) and Yolande (Eirene) of Montferrat, Theodore

28 Philes, *Carmina*, ed. Miller, II, pp. 230-33 (Nº 219). See Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 711.

29 See lines 1: *protostrator*; 8-9: Glabas suffers from an unspecified ailment. George Pachymeres, *Historia*, ed. Bekker, vol. 2, p. 445, lines 14-17, states that Glabas was severely afflicted by gout during his last campaign of 1304.

30 E.g. Odorico, *Il Prato e l'Ape*; Roueché, 'Literary Background', pp. 114-17.

31 See the panegyrical account of Glabas' military career in Philes, *Carmina*, ed. Miller, I, pp. 240-55 (Nº 237), which in turn purports to narrate a fresco cycle at an uncertain location. See Belting et al., *Pammakaristos*, p. 12-13, 18-19; and generally Kyriakidis, *Warfare*, pp. 48-50.

came to embody a hybridised Byzantine-North Italian culture. Inheriting a maternal claim to the Marquisate of Montferrat at the age of 14, he spent most of his life from 1306 in his subalpine realm, except for two short periods in Constantinople (1317-18/19, 1326-8). While the instigation and motives of these visits are obscured by the partisan character of contemporary sources, on both occasions Theodore found himself without employment or influence and returned to his fractious Italian possessions.[32] During his second Byzantine sojourn, in November 1326, he wrote a treatise in Greek on the art of war and civil governance. In an autobiographical prologue and epilogue, he states that, on departing for Montferrat, he left behind this work to compensate for his absence and as counsel to his father and nephew, Andronikos III (r. 1328-41), between whom a long if intermittent power struggle (1321-8) was soon to reach its climax with Andronikos II's deposition (1328). This Greek text is now lost. After his return to Italy, Theodore translated his treatise into Latin, at Vercelli in 1330. By or at this point, in a revisionary process now difficult to reconstruct in detail, he added (or modified) the prologue and appended the epilogue.[33] This Latin version is now also largely lost but its survival until at least the sixteenth century permitted the preservation of two fragments. The text of the prologue was long ago identified in an extract quoted in Benvenuto da Sangiorgio's *Cronica del Monferrato*, an early sixteenth-century regional history partly based on documents in the marchesal archive.[34] Scholarship since the 1930s has from time to time signalled the existence of a second fragment, preserved in a seventeenth-century miscellaneous manuscript in the Bibilothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Paris (N° 1142, fols. 350r-359r), but the text remains unpublished. My preliminary investigation indicates a self-contained extract from the final section of Theodore's work, which a preceding editorial annotation calls '*De regimine principis et de arte guerrae*'. This appears to be a later copy of an extract originally transcribed by or for Giovanni Giacomo Calandra (1478-1543), the literary courtier and secretary to Federico II, Duke of Mantua, who acquired Montferrat in 1536.[35] Scholarly enquiry into Theodore's treatise,

32 For Theodore Palaiologos' life and historical context see now Kiesewetter, 'Markgraf Theodoros', pp. 133-77, citing older literature; also Shawcross, "Do Thou Nothing", pp. 90-95, 98-105; with selected contributions in Maestri, *L'arrivo in Monferrato* and Settia, *Quando venit marchio Grecus*.

33 Kiesewetter, 'Markgraf Theodoros', pp. 122-5, surveying previous scholarship.

34 Benvenuto da Sangiorgio, *Cronica*, ed. Vernazza, pp. 117-22. An earlier edition by L.A. Muratori (Rerum Italicarum scriptores 23), Milan 1733, col. 450A-457A, is reprinted in Knowles, *Enseignements*, pp. 25-41.

35 I am grateful to the Bibilothèque Sainte-Geneviève for its assistance. See previously e.g. de Vries-van der Velden, *Théodore Métochite*, pp. 233-4; Settia, 'il re di Francia', pp. 213-14. The

however, ultimately relies on a further stage of translation. Shortly after Theodore rendered his work into Latin, Jean de Vignay (*c*.1282/5-*c*.1340), a prolific professional Latin-to-French translator, produced a French version, possibly *c*.1336/7, for presentation to or at the request of Philip VI of France (r. 1328-50). This French version is preserved in two manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Royal de Belgique, Nº 11042 (XIV) and 9467 (XV), the second seemingly a copy of the first. The text bears the heading *Enseignemens ou ordenances pour un seigneur qui a guerres et grans gouvernemens a faire*, suggesting a balance of military and political content. In his own dedicatory prologue, transmitted separately in Dijon Bibliothèque Municipale Nº 213 (1406), Jean de Vignay alternatively describes Theodore's work as a recent "petite livre … intitulé *Le consoil et l'ordonnance d'armes en fait de guerre*". The original form and wording of the title are unknown.[36]

The surviving witnesses to the Theodore's work are therefore at a considerable remove from the original. Crucially, the French version is explicitly an abridgement. In his prologue Jean de Vignay explains: "I have omitted several matters (plusieurs chose), as much for the sake of brevity as because they did not touch upon deeds of arms or war (au fait dez armes ne de guerre)". The French text has thus lost an unknown quantity of material, presumably relating to civil governance, and a comprehensive assessment of Theodore's work is no longer possible.[37] Nevertheless, the treatise appears to have been primarily military in content and objective, unless we suppose that Jean excised more than half the Latin text, a proposition that is contrary to Jean's verifiable methodology in his other translations and, arguably, inconsistent with his report of a 'petite livre'. In addition, if their testimony can be considered authoritative, later Montferratese chroniclers, including at least one who knew, fully or partly, the lost Latin version, record a purely military treatise.[38]

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extract is preceded by the label: "Ex libro (q[ui].e[st]. Jo. Jacobi Calandrae) Theodori Palaeologi de regim[ine] principis et de arte guerrae". The last four words are omitted from the description in Ch. Kohler, *Catalogue des manuscrits de la bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève*, I (Paris 1893), p. 521. The extract bears the heading 'Capitulum ix' and ostensibly comprises the last of nine chapters into which the text was originally divided (below n. 41). This substantial Latin fragment equates to the French version in Knowles, *Enseignements*, pp. 74-107 ('Ja soit ce que e raconte … de mon pere; etc.').

36 French text in Knowles, *Enseignements*, pp.21-112, with remarks on the text and manuscripts at pp. 10-12, 17-19; an improved text of the epilogue in de Vries-van der Velden, *Théodore Métochite*, pp. 240-47. Date and circumstances of the French version: Settia, 'il re di Francia', pp. 211-18. Variant titles: Theodore Palaiologos, *Enseignemens* pp. 21, 23.

37 Knowles, *Enseignements*, pp. 10-11, with text at 22 (fol. 34r).

38 Benvenuto da Sangiorgio, *Cronica*, ed. Vernazza, p. 117: 'un' opera della disciplina militare'. See also *Galeotto del Carretto*, *Cronica di Monferrato*, ed. G. Avogadro (Monumenta

Jean de Vignay's large oeuvre of Latin-to-French translations, for which in most cases the Latin text survives, affords some comparative insights. His French version of Theodore's Latin shares the peculiar syntax and eccentric vocabulary that results from his mechanical word-for-word rendition, even to the point of allowing plausible restoration of Latin phrases and constructions. It is also possible to discern a deeply buried Greek linguistic stratum in some technical vocabulary.[39] The poor French style may have been exacerbated by Theodore's self-professed mediocrity as a Latinist – and the Latin prologue affirms that this statement was not merely a conventional apologia. Notwithstanding his literal adherence to the Latin text at a linguistic level, with regard to structure and content it is clear that in his later translations Jean exercised greater interpretive liberty, including alterations, omissions and interpolation of extraneous material. While his French version of Theodore's work belongs to this late period, in the absence of the Latin text any attempt at isolating the translator's modifications becomes a partly subjective exercise, but not an impossible task given that Jean's other translations elucidate his methodology, tastes and interests.[40]

To judge by the French text, Theodore's treatise, though digressive and poorly arranged, offered simple advice, reduced to essentials. The text was formerly subdivided into nine chapters, but the French version retains only vestiges of this structure.[41] Its content broadly treats warfare and martial culture, notably the prerequisite virtues of a prince, with recommendations on chivalrous, humane and just conduct, and psychological insights into the loyalty and remuneration of soldiers, including mercenaries, and treatment of non-combatants; the mobilisation and, briefly, equipping of armies, principally cavalry; battle deployment and tactics, with particular attention to religious observance, discipline and morale, command and control, as well as practical questions such as equitable division of booty, ransom of captives, rewards and punishments; and diffuse remarks on different categories of conflict, including truces, strongholds, raiding, reconnaissance, stratagems, camp security, logistics and sieges.[42] The influence of known written sources, Greek

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Historiae Patriae, Scriptores 3), Turin 1843, col. 1177: 'un elegante libro di dottrine militare'; *Cronica di Monferrato*, ed. G.B. Moriondo, *Monumenta Aquensia*, Turin 1789-90, vol. 2, col. 212, lines 18-21: 'un libro de Re militari'. For a recent attempt to define and contextualise the 'constitutional' component of the original work see Shawcross, "Do Thou Nothing", pp. 95-105.

39 Knowles, 'Jean de Vignay', pp. 372-6; *Enseignements*, pp. 12-17.

40 Knowles, 'Jean de Vignay', pp. 356-72, 375-6; *Enseignements*, pp. 10-12;

41 Theodore Palaiologos, *Enseignemens*, p. 106, with first and second chapter-headings at pp. 47, 74.

42 Knowles, *Enseignements*, pp. 6-10; Ross, 'The Prince Answers Back', pp. 167-77.

or Latin, cannot be demonstrated. Potential parallels with Leo's *Taktika* or Kekaumenos' *Strategikon* do not extend beyond commonplace advice or universal practices. There is no trace of Theodore's familiarity with Latin military literature, not even the near-ubiquitous *Epitoma rei militaris* of Vegetius.[43]

Theodore's motives in writing are hard to disentangle from his self-justifying account and the hostile reports of contemporaries. He addressed his work as 'bon conseil' to the feuding co-emperors, ostensibly inspired by duty to and love of his kinsmen and fatherland. His plaintive remedy for Byzantium's impoverished and beleaguered condition may reflect a wider intellectual debate and popular pessimism about the empire's future.[44] Given the circumstances of its composition, it seems unlikely that his Greek text ever circulated widely; certainly no influence or knowledge of the work has been detected in subsequent Byzantine literature. Indeed Theodore's decision to reorient his treatise towards a new, western readership could signify its failure in a Byzantine setting, especially after his father's dethronement in 1328 eclipsed what little influence he still possessed in Constantinople. Although originally written in Greek and with the declared intention of contributing to imperial salvation, this was by no means a straightforward product of Byzantine military or literary culture. The thirty-six-year-old Theodore professedly based the work on his own military experiences, *c*.1306/7-*c*.1325, when he fought successive rival claimants, rebellious vassals and urban insurrections in Montferrat. Accordingly, his 'lessons' in warfare are most consistent with the military traditions of communal and seigneurial conflict in contemporary Lombardy.[45] Recent analysis has similarly located the surviving 'constitutional' element of the text in the civic and conciliar institutions of northern Italy.[46] Insofar as Theodore's treatise is usually characterised as the work of an Italian dynast who happened also to be a Byzantine prince, it is of primary interest in terms of the diffusion of western ideas or literary forms into late Byzantium.

Some Readers of Military Treatises

The limited direct evidence for readers of military treatises, which works they read, and their views of this genre in general, accumulates in the late eleventh

43 Knowles, *Enseignements*, pp. 7-8

44 Theodore Palaiologos, *Enseignemens*, pp. 35-6, 39-40, 107-11; Shawcross, "Do Thou Nothing", pp. 98-105, 112-16

45 Knowles, *Enseignements* 2-3, 8; Settia, 'La prassi bellica' 667-90; Bargigia, 'Gli aspetti militari', pp. 195-209.

46 Shawcross, "Do Thou Nothing", pp. 102-4, 117-18.

and twelfth centuries. Some sources are non-specific. Kekaumenos advises his sons (19.13-23): "When you are at leisure and not occupied with military duties, read military books (στρατηγικὰς βίβλους) and histories and the books of the church".[47] He affirms the value of religious texts to soldiers inasmuch as the Bible abounds in "maxims of morality and generalship; for almost the whole of the Old Testament relates to generalship (γνωμικὰ καὶ ἠθικὰ καὶ στρατηγικά· σχεδὸν γὰρ πᾶσα ἡ παλαιὰ στρατηγικά εἰσιν)". Elsewhere Kekaumenos more clearly refers to military treatises, which he differentiates from his own work in terms of their greater technical content and operational detail. On the subject of battles, he concedes (10.23-4): "I would have shown you also how you ought to deploy on the day of battle, but the earlier authors (οἱ ἀρχαιότεροι) have set this out adequately and one should find them sufficient". Similarly, on siegecraft he directs readers to existing technological literature (16.15-19): "As those marvellous men who compiled books on military devices (οἱ περὶ μηχανημάτων στρατηγικῶν συγγραψάμενοι) devised rams and machines and many other tools…, I too tell you to devise one of their devices, but, if you can, also think up something new; for this is more praise-worthy". This last remark reiterates a recurrent appeal to adapt or improvise upon book-learning and ancient exemplum on the basis of personal experience and ingenuity (13.3-10, 19.23-7).[48]

More enlightening are certain historical works that remark on the military instruction or expertise of members of the imperial dynasty and aristocracy. Some attest generally to the role treatises might play in the schooling of noble youths. Writing in the 1130s, Nikephoros Bryennios describes the educational programme that Basil II (r. 976-1025) devised for his wards John and Isaac Komnenos in the 1020s, which alongside equestrian and weaponry skills included "studying the tactical treatises (τὰ τακτικὰ μελετᾶν) so that they might know how to deploy a phalanx and draw up files, to encamp appropriately and put up a palisade, and indeed all the other things the tactical treatises teach (τὰ τακτικὰ ἐκδιδάσκουσι)"; whether or not this historical vignette is accurate, it presumably reflects the high-born Bryennios' view of a typical or ideal aristocratic upbringing.[49] Other historians cite specific works. Notably Psellos, in a portrait of his friend Caesar John Doukas in the 1070s, observes:

47 The phrase στρατηγικὰς βίβλους is an editorial emendation from an obviously corrupted text. See the apparatus in Roueché, *Kekaumenos*, for this and alternative restorations.

48 See generally McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, pp. 192-4, citing examples in other authors.

49 Nikephoros Bryennios, *Historia* 1.1, ed. P. Gautier, *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire*, Brussels 1975, pp. 75-7.

> As for matters relating to generalship (στρατηγίαν), he has attained a knowledge of that science (ἐπιστήμην) comparable to those ancient and much-sung Caesars, and all the daring deeds and accomplishments of those Hadrians and Trajans and men of the same company, not spontaneously, nor by chance, but from books on tactics and generalship and siegecraft and from what the likes of Ailianos and Apollodoros have written (ἀπὸ τῶν τακτικῶν βιβλίων καὶ στρατηγικῶν καὶ πολιορκητικῶν καὶ περὶ ὅσων οἱ περὶ Αἰλιανὸν καὶ Ἀπολλόδωρον συγγεγράφασιν).[50]

Here Psellos adduces two ancient military treatises, Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria* (*c.*106-13) and Apollodoros' *Poliorketika* (*c.*101-2), both originally addressed to Trajan, though prior textual corruption and/or editorial guesswork left Byzantine readers unsure in either case whether the addressee was in fact Trajan or Hadrian. Similarly, with regard to Basil II's knowledge of battle formations, Psellos reports that the emperor "had picked up some from books (ἀπὸ τῶν βιβλίων ἀναλεξάμενος)", but contrived others from experience. More revealingly, when the historian praises Basil's exceptional grasp of the minutiae of tactical deployment, he couches his encomium in precisely the obsolete classical vocabulary of Ailianos' treatise and related works:

> He had an accurate knowledge of matters relating to the army, and I do not just mean of formations in the general, nor constituent units, nor the linking and unlinking of formations appropriate to each occasion, but also the duties of the *prōtostatēs* (πρωτοστάτην) and the duties of the *hēmilochitēs* (ἡμιλοχίτην) and those of the man behind....[51]

Elsewhere Psellos resorts to the panegyrical topos of likening emperors to their imperial predecessors – again with the rhetorical pluralisation of 'Trajans and Hadrians' – or famous commanders of classical antiquity, and examples from other authors are easily assembled.[52] His specification of or allusion to particular ancient military texts, however, suggests something more than a historian's literary posturing. Writing around 80 years later, Anna Komnene similarly remarks on the generalship of her father Alexios I (r. 1081-1118) in 1116/17:

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50 Psellos, *Chronographia* 7.137 (b 16).

51 Psellos, *Chronographia* 1.32-3; cf. Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria* 5.3-4.

52 E.g. Psellos, *Chronographia* 3.8. See also e.g. Theodore II Doukas Laskaris, *In Laudem Iohannis Ducae Imperatoris* 14, ed. L. Tartaglia, *Theodorus II Ducas Lascaris, Opuscula rhetorica,* Munich/Leipzig 2000, p. 58, lines 807-12.

> … he then seized this opportunity and actually drew up [his forces] in the battle order (πολεμικὴν σύνταξιν) for which he had long been yearning and had so often written down when planning these deployments – for he was not unfamiliar with the *Taktika of* Ailianos (ἦν γὰρ οὐδὲ τῆς Αἰλιανοῦ Τακτικῆς ἀδαής).[53]

In Anna's description of military operations, the exact form of Alexios' battle order – apparently a marching square – remains opaque and one struggles to discern the relevance of Ailianos' treatise, not least because she subsequently alleges that this 'new' deployment was Alexios' own, divinely-inspired innovation.[54] While the possibility that Anna has imitated Psellos cannot be excluded, and the actual extent of Alexios' familiarity with this or any other treatise is not demonstrable, Anna's remark nevertheless presupposes that the name of Ailianos would resonate with her readers.[55] From these idealised portraits it may be safely inferred that a knowledge of Ailianos and similar 'classics' was considered a desirable or essential component of a military education.

In practical terms, the appeal of Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria* is not easily explained. Originating in a lost archetype by the Stoic philosopher Poseidonios of Apameia (*c.*135-*c.*51 BC), this sub-genre of Greco-Roman military literature delineates the arcane terminology, internal articulation and tactical drills of an arithmetically idealised army, probably modelled on the late Seleucid army. The text largely comprises a sequence of schematised evolutions for a Hellenistic infantry phalanx. While Ailianos originally introduced his work as a historical-antiquarian exercise, in Byzantium it evolved into an influential military 'classic', acquiring an authority in the Greek-speaking East analogous to that of Vegetius in the Latin West. It served as a selective model for the form and/or content of Byzantine military treatises, particularly in the conception of basic infantry formations and drill, but also became a font of classicizing vocabulary and antique wisdom cited as literary ornament or proof of professional erudition. Furthermore, of all the extant Greco-Roman *taktika*, the textual transmission of Ailianos' treatise exhibits by far the highest degree of Byzantine scholarly interest, witnessed by successive recensions and inter-

53 Anna Komnene, *Alexiad* 15.3.6.

54 Anna Komnene, *Alexiad* 15.3.7-8, 4.7-6.4, 7.1-2, with remarks of Bennett, 'Fighting March' 8-10.

55 For speculations on Alexios' knowledge of military literature: Alexopoulos, 'Military Handbooks', pp. 50-67.

polations, adaptations, paraphrases and excerpts.[56] Correspondingly, as if to confirm Psellos' pairing of the two texts, within the ballistic-mechanical branch of Greco-Roman military literature Apollodoros' *Poliorketika* attracted the highest degree of late-antique/Byzantine editorial intervention and commentary.[57] It is therefore no coincidence that Psellos himself produced an epitome of Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria*, the classical paradigm he names in his historical writing. One sees here perhaps not only the polymathic scholar, but also the courtier and imperial educator, eager to promote book-based learning as equal or superior to martial experience. Given that Psellos was tutor to the future Michael VII (r. 1071-8), it is conceivable that his own abridgement of Ailianos was intended as a teaching text for a young prince. More generally, the evidence suggests that this genre exercised a socio-cultural function as a facet of aristocratic schooling and identity, over and above whatever practical utility these texts might (or might not) have possessed as 'technical' or 'scientific' literature.[58]

Manuscript Production and Ownership

Contemporary manuscript production potentially offers insights into the relative, if not quantifiable, popularity of certain authors or works, their contemporary literary milieu, and the tastes of readers. This category of evidence is largely inferential and calls for preliminary caveats. Limitations of space allow only general remarks. Detailed discussion of evidence for dating, copyists and provenance must await a later occasion. Twelve extant manuscripts copied between *c*.1050 and *c*.1450 contain military treatises – Greek, Roman and/or Byzantine – either as complete texts or excerpts. At least three other manuscripts can (indeed must) be reconstructed as lost intermediaries between their respective descendants and prior witnesses to the textual transmission of Ailianos' treatise.[59] These 15 represent an intentionally minimalist sample of manuscripts assignable to this period with certainty; the copying of others can, of course, be hypothesised or surmised but not demonstrated.

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56 The essential study remains Dain, *Histoire*, pp. 77-115, 129-82, even if some of Dain's conclusions now require modification. See additional remarks in Rance, 'Reception', pp. 295-301, and Rance, *Strategikon* (forthcoming).

57 Blyth, 'Apollodorus'; Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, pp. 1-8, 153-248 *passim*; Whitehead, *Apollodorus*, pp. 17-18, 28-34.

58 See remarks of McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, pp. 191-4; Loreto, 'Il generale e la biblioteca', pp. 564-6; Rance, 'Reception', pp. 291-4.

59 Dain, *Histoire*, pp. 243-342, with stemma facing p. 382.

Extant Manuscripts copied between *c.*1050 and *c.*1450		
Parisinus gr. 1385	13C	Leo, *Taktika*
Oxoniensis Baroccianus gr. 131	1250-1280	Nikephoros Ouranos, *Taktika*
Laurentianus gr. LVI-1	1290s	Polyainos, *Strategemata*
Vaticanus gr. 989	1290-1310	Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria*; Leo, *Excerptum*
Mosquensis synodalis gr. 298	14C	Nikephoros II Phokas, *Praecepta militaria*; Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*
Laurentianus gr. LXXV-6	14C	*Sylloge tacticorum*
Marcianus gr. Z. 516 (904)	1380-1400[a]	Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria*; Leo, *Excerptum*
Vindobonensis phil. gr. 120 + 112	1350s	Extracts from classical *poliorketika*; Extracts from Leo, *Taktika*; Extracts from Nikephoros Ouranos, *Taktika*
Monacensis gr. 452	1350-1360	Nikephoros Ouranos, *Taktika*
Vindobonensis med. gr. 29	*c.*1400	Extracts from Leo, *Taktika*; Extract from *Hypotheseis*
Constantinopolitanus gr. 19	1410-1420	Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria*; Leo, *Excerptum*; Psellos, *Περὶ πολεμικῆς συντάξεως*
Constantinopolitanus gr. 36	1430s	Nikephoros Ouranos, *Taktika*
Reconstructed Lost Manuscrits copied between *c.*1050 and *c.*1450		
Dain *Bourguetianus*	1150-1250	Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria*; Leo, *Excerptum*
Dain Γ	13C	Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria*; Leo, *Excerptum*
Dain Δ	13C	Ailianos, *Taktika Theoria*; Leo, *Excerptum*

a Bernardinello, 'Le carte', pp. 53-5, *contra* Dain, *Histoire*, pp. 303-5; 'Inventaire raisonné', p. 48, who dates the codex to *c.*1330; similarly Mioni, *Codices graeci*, vol. 2, p. 381.

Difficulties arise in defining a 'military manuscript'. Book production associated with the ninth-/tenth-century 'renaissance' in Byzantine military writing is typified by large collective codices, in most, and possibly all, cases created at or in connection with the imperial court, which incorporate numerous exclusively military texts, loosely categorised according to (sub-)genre or period.[60] No such military collections are known to have been either assembled or copied after *c.*1050. Thereafter, while some longer treatises are transmitted separately in single-work codices (*Par. gr.* 1385, *Monac. gr.* 452, *Constantinop. gr.* 36), most military texts occur in collective or composite codices of largely non-military material. In some cases, the accompanying works constitute diverse and wholly unrelated miscellanies (*Barocc. gr.* 131, *Marc. gr.* Z. 516, *Laur. gr.* LXXV-6, *Vindob. med. gr.* 29), but in others the overall content of a codex may reveal contemporary notions of genre and/or the literary-cultural

60 Rance, 'Reception', pp. 290-99, 302-11, 324-5, with extensive bibliography.

environment in which a military text was copied or expected to be read. For example, *Laur. gr*. LVI-1 (1290s) transmits the sole extant exemplar of the original version of Polyainos' *Strategemata* (written *c*.161-3) within an assortment of rhetorical handbooks and paradoxographical literature, suggesting that the editor-copyist perceived Polyainos' collection of historical stratagems as a source of exempla in rhetorical composition or as intellectual and moral edification.[61] Elsewhere a self-contained suite of three texts concerning tactical deployment – Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria*, an annotated diagram conventionally termed *Syntaxis armatorum quadrata* and Leo's '*Excerptum*' – occurs in proximity to different genres of 'practical' writing.[62] In *Vat. gr*. 989 (*c*.1290-1310) they are packaged with Xenophon's equestrian and hunting manuals in a textual assemblage that arguably caters to 'aristocratic' pursuits. In *Constantinop. gr*. 19 (*c*.1410-20) the same trio, together with Psellos' epitome of Ailianos, finds a place among diverse 'scientific' texts, including mathematical and technological treatises. As previously noted, an alternative common theme is discernible in *Mosq. synod. gr.* 298, which transmits Kekaumenos' *Strategikon*, alongside Nikephoros Phokas' *Praecepta militaria* (written 960s), within a corpus of advisory and didactic compendia. In this instance, and perhaps of broader relevance elsewhere, the likelihood that the collection of texts transmitted in this fourteenth-century codex was first assembled in the late eleventh century may signal continuities in literary taste and generic categorisation, but if the fourteenth-century copyist simply reproduced his exemplar en bloc, this textual assemblage need not reflect contemporary preferences and there can be no certainty that the military component of the collection was of primary interest.[63] Nevertheless, the text of Kekaumenos' treatise exhibits clear signs of prior editorial intervention, probably in the twelfth/thirteenth centuries, including a new prologue, sectional divisions, numeration and rubrics, and a pinax. This new paratextual apparatus at least signals an editor's attempt to make a fresh transcription suitable for a contemporary (and wider?) audience.

With regard to individual military texts copied during these four centuries, this small codicological sample inevitably entails the hazards of potentially unrepresentative chance survival and thus offers no secure gauge of a work's previous or current circulation. Certainly the production of other, now-lost copies of Leo's *Taktika*, for example, can be plausibly placed in this period on the basis of sixteenth-century *recentiores* that do not descend from any

61 Schindler, *Überlieferung*, pp. 15-18, with remarks of McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, p. 192

62 Dain, *L'"Extrait tactique"*; *Histoire*, pp. 249-53, 303-7; 'Inventaire raisonné', pp. 48-9.

63 See above n. 13.

surviving Byzantine prototype.[64] Furthermore, our level of ignorance is underlined by the prospect of late Byzantine copyists and readers enjoying access to works that have since disappeared entirely, such as the so-called '*Corpus Perditum*', an early tenth-century compendium that was apparently still available, at least in part, during the fourteenth century.[65] Even so, certain patterns are discernible. One peculiarity is the incidence of works which, though written and demonstrably read before 1000, were unaccountably omitted from collections of military texts assembled in the later tenth century, which nonetheless incorporated other treatises composed in the 950s-980s and are otherwise distinguished by apparent inclusivity rather than obvious selective criteria.[66] Accordingly, the *Sylloge tacticorum* (*c*.930-*c*.950) and Nikephoros Phokas' *Praecepta militaria* (960s) – excluded from late tenth-century military corpora and in each case transmitted in a single fourteenth-century manuscript – appear as outliers to a core tradition of Greco-Roman-Byzantine military literature. Explanations for this complicated issue would require more detailed scrutiny of both the codicological contexts and textual history of each work, particularly with regard to a text's potential redundance following its inclusion or revision in a subsequent composition(s) – thus recent tactical innovations delineated the *Sylloge tacticorum* were refined in Nikephoros Phokas' *Praecepta militaria*, which was in turn subsumed and updated in the *Taktika* of Nikephoros Ouranos (*c*.1000). It is also worth noting the rare peripheral provenance of one of these codices, *Mosq. synod. gr.* 298, the unique witness to Nikephoros Phokas' treatise, which was copied in Trebizond and seemingly replicates an eleventh-century archetype that has been located to eastern Anatolia. Some peculiarities of textual transmission in the late Byzantine period may therefore reflect differences between Constantinopolitan and provincial book production and readership.

Equally striking is the relative frequency of two works. First, the prevalence of Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria* coincides with the direct evidence, albeit limited to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that this treatise was a fashionable military 'classic', at least among the military aristocracy. One could note in addition that Apollodoros, the other ancient author named by Psellos, is also represented in this sample, if far more modestly, as excerpts in *Vindob. phil. gr*. 120

64 Dain, 'Inventaire raisonné', pp. 35-9.

65 Mecella, 'Überlieferung', pp. 100-01, 107-12; Rance, 'Reception', 338-40, with older literature.

66 See in particular the corpus of tenth-century military works assembled in 'Mazoneus' (*c*.980-*c*.1000), the lost hyparchtype of several extant collective military codices copied in the first half of the eleventh century. See Rance 'Reception', pp. 298-99, 324-5, with older bibliography.

(1350s). Perhaps more surprising is the apparent popularity of the *Taktika* of Nikephoros Ouranos, variously preserved in four codices. Three have long been recognised and attest to interest over the whole period: *Barocc. gr.* 131 (*c*.1250-80), *Monac. gr.* 452 (1350s) and *Constantinop. gr*. 36 (1430s).[67] Substantial excerpts in a fourth manuscript, *Vindob. phil. gr*. 120 + 112 (1350s), have been overlooked in all previous studies.[68] As a more recent work, the more frequent copying of Ouranos' *Taktika* may seem unremarkable, but warrants some attempt at explanation. An almost entirely derivative compilation, the *Taktika* subsumes material from numerous tactical treatises written over the preceding fourteen centuries, directly and, more often, via intermediary compositions, either in full or as extracts, in some cases reproduced near-verbatim but typically paraphrased into tenth-century Greek.[69] To a modern reader, the *Taktika* resembles less a structured handbook than a haphazard dossier of source-material, a *compendium compendiorum*, dimly reflective of a tenth-century intellectual taste for 'encyclopaedic' excerption and/or compilation. This is, however, a modern judgement on a medieval work, which contemporaries possibly found easier to navigate.[70] Moreover, the *Taktika* appears to have catered to the tastes of a late Byzantine readership, inasmuch as it was favoured over specialist monographs and, crucially, was more popular than the original works from which it derives. Possible explanations entail both language and content. First, the *Taktika* presents many texts, old and new, in an updated and linguistically modified form comprehensible to late Byzantine readers.[71] Second, in its wide selection and, to some extent, simplification of a vast older literature, the *Taktika* was essentially a work of reference that offered a bit (and

67 Dain, *Nicéphore Ouranos*, pp. 11-13, 93-107; de Foucault, 'Douze chapitres', pp. 282-4; McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, pp. 81-3. For the date of *Constantinop. gr*. 36 (= Topkapı G.İ. 36) see Harlfinger, *Wasserzeichen*, vol. 2, Index II, p. 24, Index III, p. 27 (monts 64*). I am preparing a full study of this codex.

68 *Vindob. phil. gr*. 112 and 120, originally a single codex, were divided by seventeenth-century cataloguing. One fragment in *Vindob. phil. gr*. 112 (fols. 9r-v) corresponds to *Taktika* 65.1-24. This witness was omitted from the editions of de Foucault, 'Douze chapitres', pp. 297-303; McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, pp. 152-62. Disarranged fragments at *Vindob. phil. gr*. 120 (fols. 146r-147v) include material from *Taktika* 61 to 72. I will examine this manuscript in a separate study.

69 The foundational study remains Dain, *Nicéphore Ouranos*, pp. 15-91; with modifications by McGeer, '*Tradition and Reality*', pp. 131-4; Mecella, 'Überlieferung', pp. 101-14; Rance, 'Reception', pp. 338-56, 360-63.

70 Trombley, '*Taktika*'.

71 For Nikephoros' adaption of his source material and the two recensions of the *Taktika*: Dain, *Nicéphore Ouranos*, pp. 39-90 (selectively), 102-7; McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, pp. 83-6; Mecella, 'Überlieferung', pp. 106-7; Rance, 'Reception', pp. 343-5.

conceivably the best bit) of everything; in modern terms, a '*Reader's Digest*' of Greek-Roman-Byzantine military literature.

The manuscript evidence therefore nuances our understanding of this genre in the late Byzantine period. On the one hand, it confirms the testimony of eleventh-/twelfth-century historical literature that some Byzantine readers continued to esteem certain Greco-Roman 'classics', notably Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria*. On the other hand, it also points to developments that cannot be traced at that rarefied niveau, including the otherwise unexpected currency of non-literary, less culturally prestigious compositions, like Ouranos' *Taktika*, reflecting a more 'popular' linguistic register but not necessarily a different readership in socio-cultural terms. More generally, the evidence suggests that the transmission of military texts was now more divergent and complex than the court-inspired scholarship and book production of the tenth century, while proximity to other genres allows various and perhaps, over time, shifting literary-cultural contexts for the readers of military treatises.

Finally, if briefly, evidence for the late Byzantine owners of military manuscripts – those copied in this period and earlier – is meagre but instructive. Conclusions must be provisional and avoid characterisation of 'military' readers as culturally one-dimensional; certainly the Byzantine military elite possessed other types of literature.[72] Modern research has conjectured the ownership of certain manuscripts. Most plausibly, textual and codicological criteria locate fourteenth-century *Mosq. synod. gr.* 298 in the Trapezuntine realm and point to a possible connection with its ruling dynasty, the Grand Komnenoi.[73] Other marginal notices continue to mystify. For example, *Vaticanus gr.* 1605 (fol. 58v), an early/mid-eleventh-century manuscript of pseudo-Heron's *Parangelmata Poliorketika,* contains an ineptly written twelfth-/thirteenth-century inscription to an otherwise unknown Alexios Chrysomallos, who may have been its owner.[74] It is uncertain whether a notice inscribed by an Astrapas Magister in *Marcianus Z gr.* 516 (fol. 1r) refers to its possessor or illustrator.[75] Inscriptions in *Vaticanus gr.* 219 (fols. 1r, 421v) asserting the ownership of George, Count of Corinth, would be of interest here if Wescher's dating of this collection of military treatises to 1406, repeated in recent scholarship, were correct; in fact

72 Browning, 'Literacy', pp. 42-4.

73 Fonkič, 'О рукописи', pp. 110-12, 118; McGeer, *Dragon's Teeth*, p. 4-5; Roueché, 'Admonitory Tradition', pp. 137-8; Stefec, 'Buchproduktion', p. 216.

74 Dain, *Héron de Byzance* p. 27; Giannelli, *Codices Vaticani*, p. 262.

75 Mioni, *Codices graeci*, vol. 2, pp. 381-2.

the manuscript, like George (*c*.1485-1550s), belongs to the sixteenth century.[76] The only codex whose late Byzantine ownership is established with certainty is *Laurentianus gr*. LV-4, the most important surviving collection of Greek, Roman and Byzantine military texts. Codicological affinities with other manuscripts indicate that it was a product of an imperial scriptorium in *c*.950, almost certainly intended for Constantine VII's new palace library. While its subsequent history up to the early fifteenth century is unknown, notices of births and deaths inserted into blank spaces (fols. 11v, 12r, 255v) indicate that by 1408 and until at least 1450 the manuscript belonged to the family of Demetrios Laskaris Leontares (died 1431), the foremost general, diplomat and minister of John VII (r. 1390, 1399-1402); Manuel II (r. 1391-1425) and John VIII (r. 1425-48). Contrary to assumptions of older scholarship, these notices do not show that the general himself possessed the codex during this period, though his prior acquisition or ownership remains likely. The longest series (1408-34) was inscribed by his son, John Laskaris Leontares (died 1437), a governor of Selymbria and military commander. A second, shorter sequence (1448-50) is by a homonymous grandson, Demetrios Laskaris Leontares (1418-post-1475), who married the daughter of Demetrios Palaiologos Metochites, *megas stratopedarchēs* and last governor of Constantinople.[77] While it is entirely fitting that the most famous Byzantine collection of military texts should end up as a heritable heirloom in the possession of a prominent military-gubernatorial family in the final decades of Byzantium, it would be easy to overstate or simplify the 'military' dimension of this rare case, especially as the Leontarai can be similarly connected to several other, non-military manuscripts and enjoyed a wider cultural hinterland, manifest in a privileged relationship with the Constantinopolitan monastery of Prodromos Petra, which in this era was noted for its important library and productive scriptorium.[78]

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76 Wescher, *Poliorcétique*, pp. xxxii-xxxviii; repeated Gatto, *Περὶ μηχανημάτων*, pp. 136-7, with *stemma codicum* at p. 187. See correctly Mercati/Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Codices Vaticani*, pp. 284-5; Pingree, 'Library', p. 357. Dain, 'Inventaire raisonné', pp. 42-4 identifies *Vat. gr*. 219 (*c*.1545-55) as a copy of *Oxon. Magdalen Coll. gr*. 14 (*c*.1540-50; omitted by Gatto), itself an apograph of mid-eleventh-century *Scorial. gr*. Y-III-11 (281).

77 Marginalia edited in Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken*, I, pp. 641-9 (98A-B.I.1-3), with remarks at II, pp. 445, 449, 477, 484, III, pp. 132-3; Turyn, *Dated Greek Manuscripts*, pp. xxi, 121-3; Trapp et al., *PLP*, Nr. 14676, 14677, 14679, 17981. See further Rance, 'Reception', pp. 302-10.

78 Marginalia also connects the Leontarai to e.g. *Leidensis Voss. gr*. F° 42 (psalmic commentaries); *Marc. gr*. 399 (Zonaras, *Annales*); *Vat. gr*. 1297 (mostly Aelius Aristeides); *Vat. Reg. gr*. 6 (biblical commentaries); *Sofia, CSVP Ivan Dujčev, D. gr.* 253 = *Drama, Monē Kosinitsēs* 265 (mostly legal texts). I exclude codices acquired or copied by Demetrios Laskaris Leontares (the younger) after 1453. For the library and book production at the monastery of

Conclusions

Isolated instances of military writing during the period *c*.1050-*c*.1450, including works by three experienced commanders – Kekaumenos, Glabas and Theodore Palaiologos, testify to aspects of continuity in a venerable literary tradition. Four works in as many centuries may seem exiguous in comparison to the profuse output of the late ninth/tenth centuries, but within the *longue durée* of Byzantine military literature that 'golden age' is wholly exceptional; even the notion of a corresponding sixth-century 'corpus' has unravelled in recent scholarship.[79] Although Psellos, the scholar-courtier, extolled the authority of selected classical texts, and Kekaumenos was conscious of the literary pedigree of his work, the weight of tradition seems to lie much less heavily in this era. The works of Kekaumenos and, insofar as one can judge, Theodore Palaiologos are distinctive for authorial independence from earlier models, professed reliance on firsthand experience, and a loosening of generic boundaries, whereby an exposition of military knowledge becomes one component of aristocratic *paideia*. Little can be said with certainty regarding the number or identity of the consumers of this broad genre, though it is reasonable to assume that technical content appealed to a minority interest, and doubtless literacy and expense were at all times constraining factors on distribution and access. Explicit statements and allusions in historical sources concerning readers and what they read partly coincide with what can be inferred about literary-intellectual tastes from late Byzantine book production and ownership. Overall, the evidence points to a preference for two categories of work written in different linguistic registers. First, comprehensive and derivative compendia, specifically Ouranos' *Taktika*, served as convenient and accessible digests of older literature, paraphrased into contemporary Greek. While the practical utility of these more recent compositions cannot be excluded, it is difficult to discern content or perspectives that especially suit late Byzantine military contexts or capabilities beyond basic tactical principles and perennial 'Byzantine' interests – economy of force, stratagems and scientific ingenuity.[80] Second, late Byzantine readers continued to value Greco-Roman texts, notably Ailianos' *Taktika Theoria*, an antiquarian treatise that evolved into a fashionable military 'classic' and exercised a multifaceted influence on Byzantine military culture, at least within a high socio-cultural milieu. Beyond Psellos' pedantic

Prodromos Petra: Cataldi Palau, *Studies*, pp. 197-280. See connections between Selymbria and Prodromos Petra in Kouroupou/Gini, *Catalogue*, vol. 1, pp. 167-9 (*Panagia* 48).

79 Rance, 'Syrianus Magister'; Mecella 'Überlieferung', pp. 93-8 with cited bibliography.

80 Bartusis, *Late Byzantine Army*, pp. 250-69; Kyriakidis, *Warfare*, pp. 137-56, 197-220.

armchair-generalship, such works possessed an intrinsic literary appeal and antique cachet, and could satisfy a taste for ethical edification beyond their technical subject matter. They provided the military – and civilian – aristocracy, and perhaps a wider educated 'officer class', with a conceptual framework and an elevated vocabulary in which to intellectualise and lend respectability to their profession, and for some the ability to read and cite classical military authorities became an index of a soldier's intellectual standing. Antique military treatises addressed to 'ancient' Roman emperors, such as Trajan or Hadrian, might also have played a rhetorical role in a society self-consciously enamoured of the past glories of the *Rhomaioi*, to whose traditions New Rome layed claim. More tangibly, certain classical texts served as models for the form and/or content of new compositions, a theoretical continuum fostered in part by actual continuities between ancient and medieval warfare, which allowed Byzantine writers to reprise much older material without necessarily compromising practical utility, but more often reflecting antiquarian or belletristic objectives pursued by some tradition-conscious authors. Ultimately, for this period at least, we must abandon or modify simplistic notions of 'military literature' as purely or even primarily an expression of current military theory, still less of military practice. Rather, contemporary interest in this genre is also reflective of a wider range of social, literary, intellectual and artistic dynamics within elite culture, both 'civilian' and 'military'.

Appendix: Manuel Philes' prefatory epigram on the military treatise of Michael Doukas Glabas Tarchaneiotes (*Taurinensis gr.* C.VII 7, fols. 190v-191r)

Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὸ βιβλίον, ὃ συντέταχεν ὁ πρωτοστράτωρ ἐκεῖνος ὁ Γλαβᾶς ἐν διαφόροις κεφαλαίοις στρατηγικοῖς		**Epigram on the book which the noted *protostrator* Glabas has compiled on various topics of generalship**
Ὁ συντεταχὼς τουτοῖ τὸ βιβλίον,	[190v]	The man who has compiled this very book,
Γλαβᾶς Μιχαὴλ Δούκας ὁ πρωτοστράτωρ,		Michael Doukas Glabas, the *protostrator*,
πολλὰς κατ' ἐχθρῶν ἐργασάμενος μάχας		having waged many battles against enemies
καὶ μυρία τρόπαια συστησάμενος		and set up myriad trophies
καὶ πάντα καλῶς ὀργανώσας τὸν βίον,	5	and organised his whole life well,
ἔδειξεν οἷς ἔπραξεν ἐνταῦθα, ξένε,		showed by what he achieved herein, stranger,
ὡς τῇ λογικῇ πάντα κοσμεῖται φύσει.		how everything is ordered by logical nature.
καὶ γὰρ νόμους τίθησι καὶ γνώμας γράφει,		For he sets down rules and writes down thoughts,

δι᾽ ὧν βασιλεὺς εὐγενῶς πάντα δράσει.		by which an emperor will accomplish everything nobly.
πλὴν καὶ στρατηγοῖς κόσμος ἡ βίβλος μέγας	10	In addition, the book is a great ordinance for generals;
ὁ γὰρ κατ᾽ αὐτὴν τὸν στρατὸν διεξάγων		he who leads out the army in accordance with it
ἐπιδραμεῖται καὶ σκυλεύσει πᾶν γένος		will overrun and despoil every race
καὶ τῆς ἀγαθῆς οὐχ ἁμαρτήσει τύχης·		and will not fail to have good fortune.
ἵνα δὲ μηδὲν ἐκλιπές σοι δεικνύῃ,		Lest it show you anything deficient,
τὴν ἠθικὴν παίδευσιν ἐσχάτως γράφει,	15	he writes to the utmost degree an ethical education,
καὶ ῥυθμὸν ἐντίθησι τῇ κοινῇ φύσει		and instils common nature with structure
παιδευτικὴν δή τινα συνείρων χάριν.		by composing what is surely an educational gift.
ὦ σῶμα πολλοῖς τακτικοῖς καμὸν πόνοις		O body that has toiled with many tactical labours
καὶ νοῦς ἀγαθῶν εὑρετικὸς πραγμάτων.	[191r]	and mind inventive of good deeds,
τοὺς δυσμενεῖς ἀνεῖλεν ἡ τούτου σπάθη,	20	this man's sword slew the foe,
τὰς δυτικὰς ἔσωσεν ἁλούσας πόλεις,		rescued the captured cities of the west,
τὸ βαρβαρικὸν ἐξεφαύλισε θράσος,		held cheap the courage of barbarians,
φρενῶν δὲ πυκνότητι καὶ γλώττης κράτει		with shrewdness of thought and power of words
παρῆλθε μικροῦ καὶ τὰ τῆς τέχνης βάθη		he well-nigh surpassed even the heights of the art,
τὴν εὑρετικὴν τῶν καλῶν δείξας φύσιν.	25	having shown a nature to invent things of value.
παρῆκε μὴν τὴν βίβλον ὡς ὄλβον μέγαν,		Truly he offered the book as a great blessing,
ἁπλῶς μὲν εἰπεῖν, τῇδε τῇ κτίσει πάσῃ·		to put it simply, for the whole of creation;
κοινὸν γὰρ ἦν παίδευμα· πιπτέτω φθόνος·		for it was a lesson for everyone. Let no envy arise;
ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ φιλτάτοις,		but especially for his own loved ones,
καὶ μᾶλλον αὐτῶν τῷ στρατηγικωτάτῳ,	30	and indeed for the most general-like of them,
Κομνηνοφυεῖ Δούκα Παλαιολόγῳ,		Komnenian-born Doukas Palaiologos,
ἀδελφιδῷ κρατοῦντος Αὐσόνων γένους,		nephew of the ruler of the Ausonian race,
ὃν οἶδεν Ἀνδρόνικον ἡ κλῆσις λέγειν		who is known by the name of Andronikos,
ἐκ τῆς περὶ τὴν ἕξιν ἀνδραγαθίας·		from the manly virtue of his bearing;
τῇ γὰρ ἑαυτοῦ τοῦτον ἀρθροῖ φιλτάτῃ,	35	for this man he [Glabas] joins to his most beloved daughter,
καὶ κατὰ παντὸς δυσμενοῦς ἀντεξάγει,		and against every foe he leads [him] out,
ὃν εὐθὺς ἀνέπνευσεν ἀέρος πλέον,		whom straightaway he cherished more than air,
ὃν εἰς ἀγαθὰς οἶδεν αὐχῶν ἐλπίδας		whom he confidently knows to be of good prospects
καὶ τοῦ γένους ἕνεκεν ἑδραίαν βάσιν,		and a firm foundation for the race,
ἐπείπερ αὐτοῦ προσφυὴς ἦν τῷ τρόπῳ,	40	seeing that he was naturally suited to his manner of life,
καὶ στερρὰν εἰσήνεγκε τὴν εὐστοργίαν		and he introduced an enduring affection,
ἄμεμπτον αὐτῷ πάντα παρεὶς τὸν βίον.		having passed his entire life without reproach.
θαύμαζε γοῦν, βέλτιστε, καὶ πατρὸς πόθον		So marvel, excellent reader, also at the devotion of a father
καὶ φιλτάτου πρόδηλον εἰς τοῦτον σχέσιν·		and a beloved son manifest in this relationship;
οὕτω γὰρ ἂν γένοιτο ῥυθμὸς πραγμάτων	45	for thus might come about a measured state of affairs
καὶ παντοδαπὴ τῷ γένει κατάστασις.		and in every direction a settled condition for the race.

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CHAPTER 13

The Byzantine Influence on the Military Writings of Theodore I Palaiologos, Marquis of Montferrat*

Nikolaos Kanellopoulos

> Questo Theodoro fuo signor molto perito in querra, et tutti li documenti de querra gli apprese in Italia…[1]

⁂

Introduction

In 1306 a Genoese fleet travelling on its way back from Constantinople to the mother city of Genoa, disembarked troops on Kallipolis peninsula that besieged the Catalan guard of this town fortress. On board the Genoese ships was a member of the byzantine imperial family and future ruler of the marquisate of Montferrat. He was an eyewitness of this military operation and that was his first recorded actual military experience. This man was Theodore Palaiologos, second born son of Andronikos II and Iolanda of Montferrat, known in Byzantium as Empress Irene. The brother of the byzantine Empress, the marquis of Montferrat Giovanni I (1292-1305) died without heirs and the son of his sister was elected as the new ruler. The surrounding enemies and claimants of the marquisate had taken advantage of Giovanni I's death and invaded its territory. Achaia, Anjou and Saluzzo occupied large parts of Montferrat and Theodore had to regain control with the help of the Genoese. His father-in-law, Opicino Spinola, provided the necessary troops to which a few local men were added and there began the second, and most important, phase of Theodore's military experience. Casale paid homage to the new ruler and then Pontestura, Mombello and Chivasso were occupied. Next year, an unsuccessful siege of Montecalvo was followed by the return of Vignale and Lu

* I would like to thank Matthew Bennett (formerly Senior Lecturer, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, UK) for his useful and insightful comments on preparing the translation of the Appendix and Manos Georginis (Associate Professor, Hellenic Military Academy) for his help on editing the text.

1 "This Theodore was a very experienced man in matters of war and had knowledge of all the texts on war in Italy". Galeoto del Carretto, *Cronica*, col. 1176.

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to Theodore's rule. The troops of Montferrat, led by Filipone di Langosco, were defeated in Rusignano by the forces of Achaia, Anjou and Saluzzo and Filipone was captured. Theodore was not present, but we can assume that he would be informed about the conduct of the battle and the causes of the depressing outcome. In 1313 Theodore took part in the battle of Quattordio, one of the series of events in the conflict between Guelfi and Guibellini and the next year (1314) in the battle of Abbiategrasso.[2]

In the years between 1316/17-1319 and 1325-1328 Theodore returned to his native Constantinople in order to help his father with matters of state. In 1326 he wrote a treatise with the view to advising the Byzantines on how to confront the empire's enemies. Originally written in Greek and translated by Theodore himself into Latin, it has come to us via a late fourteenth century French translation.[3] Upon his return in Montferrat, he made peace with Roberto d' Angio and tried to reoccupy some areas seized by Fillipo d' Achaia, but without any significant results. Theodore I died in 1338 and was succeeded by his son Giovanni II.

According to Aldo Settia, Theodore's treatise reflects the reality of war in Italy during the first decades of the fourteenth century. It is not just the theoretical work of a man who never had actual military experience, but the work of a man who gained his experience during the struggle to establish his authority. The question is whether Theodore acquired any experience of the art of war during the years spent in Constantinople. Were his writings influenced by this experience? Were they influenced by the byzantine art of war in general? That was the time when Byzantium was at war with the emirate of Osman and the time of the Great Catalan Company's expedition in the East and, although Theodore was not an active participant in the military affairs, he would have had inside information from the byzantine officials, his father, and especially his brother Michael IX who led the byzantine army against the empire's enemies. In the following pages, I will try to demonstrate that an important part of Theodore's practical experience reflected in his treatise had been gained during the years spent in Byzantium and thus reflects well established practices of warfare in the East.

Theodore's First Recorded Military Experience in the East

Theodore's first recorded experience of a military operation was in the siege of the Catalan guard in Kallipolis by the Genoese. According to the Catalan

2 On Theodore's life and career, see Ferraris, *Storia del Monferrato*, pp. 116-124.

3 Kiesewetter, 'Markgraf Theodoros Palaiologos', pp. 121-180. On the diffusion of the treatise in the West, see Settia, 'Gli 'Insegnamenti' e il Re di Francia', pp. 211-214.

chronicler Ramon Muntaner, who was at the head of the guard and hence an active participant of the siege, the Genoese prepared a large number of ladders in order to attack the city. Their main and most fearful weapon was the crossbow, for which special care was taken by the Catalans and instructions were given to minimize the damage of the deadly bolts.[4] The Catalans numbered 134 footsoldiers and 7 heavily armed horsemen, and the women were in armour and played an active role in the ensuing siege.[5] Initially, it looks as if the Catalans tried to block the landing of the Genoese, but to no effect. The Genoese troops (crossbowmen and pikemen) disembarked and attacked the city walls, using mainly their crossbows. Then a handful of 300 men under the Genoese commander Antonio Spinola, disembarked and moved against a city gate. Muntaner prepared a force of six horsemen, and along with 100 footsoldiers, who were ordered to discard part of their defensive equipment, counterattacked the Genoese. "So, together with the six heavily-armoured horsemen and the foot-soldiers, who issued forth swiftly and easily, we attacked their standards and knocked down three of them with our first thrust. And they, seeing us deliver a fierce attack such as this, with horsemen and foot-soldiers, were overcome and so before long they showed us their backs." The outcome of the fighting was disastrous for the Genoese who, according to Muntaner, lost 600 men, including Antonio Spinola, and were chased back to their ships. Another group of about 40 Genoese, who lagged behind, was isolated and annihilated. The ships continued their sail to Genoa.[6]

Although Theodore's involvement in this operation is unclear, nevertheless he must have acquired a first-hand experience of the Catalan battle tactics and their effective combination of horsemen and foot soldiers, as well as the efficacy of the Genoese crossbow.[7] In this case the battle was mainly a confrontation of foot-soldiers rather than horsemen. As it will be made clear below, Theodore does not ignore in his treatise the important, though not dominant, role of the foot soldiers. He acknowledges that a battle formation of foot soldiers, acting in coordination with the cavalry, could have devastating effects on the opponent. Thus, the study of the siege of Kallipolis could give us some concrete clues on the initial influences on the writings of Theodore.

4 Muntaner, p. 104.

5 Ibid., pp. 99-100.

6 Ibid., pp. 106-108.

7 Moncada, pp. 147-151. See also Bargigia, 'Aspetti militari della 'riconquista' del Marchesato', p. 197.

The Byzantine Origins of Theodore I's Treatise

According to Aldo Settia, whose works mainly focus on the conduct of war in the Italian Peninsula and, in particular, those between the Italian States, the treatise of Theodore Palaiologos is an original work, written by a person with actual experience on the battlefield and not an armchair general who simply regurgitates the views and treatises of the past.[8] He has argued conclusively that the battle experience of Theodore (eg his participation in the battles of Quatordio in 1313, Abbiategrasso in 1314 and the night attack at Moncalvo in 1306) is reflected in his work, which undoubtedly is a realistic record of military practice in Italy in the early fourteenth century.[9] But what do we know about Theodore's Byzantine past and experience and how are these reflected in his treatise?

Theodore incorporated detailed instructions on the conduct of soldiers in the field of battle. The order of battle described by Theodore is based on a cavalry formation composed of three divisions. The front division includes the bravest and better equipped cavalrymen, while the second division follows within crossbow range. The ruler or the head of the army stands with the second division.[10] If there is no infantry available then the third division should be placed on the left flank of the second division. The charge of the first division is followed by that of the second. The most crucial maneuvre was that of the third division against the exposed right flank of the enemy formation. Theodore acknowledges that this should be the coup de grace and could cause significant damage to the enemy. For a force of 1000 cavalrymen, the first division should include 300 men, the second 500 and the third 200. If infantry is available, it should be placed behind the cavalry formation. Also Theodore suggests that infantry should be placed on the left flank and equipped with bows, crossbows and javelins that would cause much damage to the enemy's right flank, killing and wounding men and horses. Equally interesting is the diversity of equipment between the first and the second division. While the cavalrymen of the front group are armed with spears the second and most important numerically group should be armed with swords and clubs. These weapons are

8 Settia, 'Gli 'Insegnamenti' ', pp. 17-20, 28. Settia, *Rapine, assedi, battaglie*, p. 193. Settia, *Tecniche e spazi*, p. 200: "… forse l'unico trattato di tecnica militare medievale che abbia come autore non un teoretico da tavolino di formazione puramente libresca, ma un uomo che aveva operato sul campo". The text of Theodore is also considered original by P. Contamine, *War*, p. 214.

9 Settia, 'Gli 'Insegnamenti' ', pp. 13-25. Settia, *Rapine, assedi, battaglie*, pp. 59-60.

10 On the place of the ruler in the battle formation, see Settia, *Esperienza militare*, pp. 24-25.

better fitted to the fighting in close quarters that will follow the charge of the first division.[11] Thus Theodore did not picture the customary western knight who performed a frontal charge but a more flexible, combined formation of horsemen a section of which can perform an outflanking attack. The battle formation described is not based exclusively on the cavalry but a strong supportive role is entrusted to the infantry whose intervention can prove crucial under certain conditions. It is important to note that when Theodore lists all the arms the men should be equipped with, he makes special reference to the effectiveness of the crossbow.[12] That reflects Theodore's experience both in Byzantium and in Italy. He had a first-hand experience of the use of this weapon by the Genoese. In 1313 in the battle of Quattordio, the crossbowmen of Ugo de Balzo inflicted severe damage on the enemy cavalrymen.[13] Equally important is Theodore's attempt to describe an outflanking maneuvre which was a very common eastern tactic, especially when performed by fast-moving troops like the horse archers, rather than a whole frontal attack.

What we should not overlook, however, is the fact that in many sections of his work, Theodore describes tactics and practices that bear many similarities to the byzantine military tradition and reality. The cases I am referring to are the following:[14]

1. Theodore recommends that if there is a narrow crossing or a river nearby, then the army should seize that terrain in order to face a numerically superior opponent.[15] In Byzantium that was a widespread method of confronting a stronger opponent, especially in the rugged and mountainous terrain of the Balkan Peninsula.
2. Theodore states that in case the enemy outnumbers the troops and attacks unexpectedly, a single group of knights and sergeants should be formed. In 1331, during the battle of Rosokastron, Andronikos III Palaiologos

11 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, p. 93.

12 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, 57.

13 Settia, *Rapine, Assedi*, Battaglie, p. 59. Maestri, 'Teodoro Paleologo', p. 21. Bargigia, 'Aspetti militari della 'riconquista' del Marchesato', pp. 206-207. Settia, *Esperienza militare*, pp. 20-23

14 The list does not include the most direct reference to Byzantine practices regarding the usage of "two small horses like those of the Greeks and the Turks, that is to say geldings or at least two mares, and that he [the mounted warrior] be armed to match the strength of his horses" as well as the armour of the horseman, which includes a mix of byzantine, western and eastern equipment. Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, p. 58. Bartusis, *Late Byzantine Army*, pp. 323-330. Ross, 'The Prince Answers Back', p. 169.

15 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, pp. 72-73.

disbanded the three groups he had formed initially and united his troops in a single group in order to fight the numerically superior Bulgarians.[16]

3. Theodore acknowledges three categories of war: the first one is the war of attrition that includes raids and looting with the aim of devastating the opponent's countryside and resources, the second one is the war of deception and the third category refers to a generalized form of open conflict.[17] Following their defeat in Apros (1305), the Byzantines reverted their strategy from open conflict to war of attrition that finally forced the Catalans to abandon the byzantine territory.[18] In general Byzantium favored strategies of 'indirect' warfare instead of total war to which they turned as a last resort.[19]
4. Elsewhere Theodore argues that the border guards should be lightly armed, trained to conduct guerrilla warfare and perform surprise attacks against the enemy raids.[20] Byzantium had a long tradition on guerilla warfare tactics and this technique of the cross border warfare was well established. Besides, during the tenth century a theoretical text on the guerrilla warfare was produced in Byzantium, which provides similar directions.[21] During the thirteenth century the Byzantines made widespread use of guerilla warfare tactics, especially against the Latins in Asia Minor and the Morea.
5. Equally characteristic are the instructions of Theodore Palaiologos on how to deal with a much more powerful enemy that had invaded the territory: A close-quarters conflict should be avoided and the countryside and castles should be secured so that the opponent would be forced to leave empty-handed. The most favourable time for counterattack comes when the enemy has returned to his territory.[22] The Byzantines were masters in this category of warfare based on the strategy of attrition. As mentioned, they had adopted this strategy with significant success in order to expel the Catalans from Macedonia.

16 Gregoras, vol.1, pp. 485-488. Kanellopoulos/Lekea, 'The Battle of Apros (1305)', pp. 133-134.

17 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, p. 80. Bargigia, 'Aspetti militari della 'riconquista' del Marchesato', pp. 203-204.

18 Kanellopoulos/Lekea, 'The Battle of Apros (1305)', pp. 131-132, 136-137.

19 Chrysos, E., 'Ο πόλεμος έσχατη λύση', in *Βυζαντινό κράτος και κοινωνία*, Athens 2003, 543-563.

20 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, pp. 84-85. Bastin, 'Le traité de Théodore Paléologue', p. 84.

21 Phokas, *On Skirmishing*, pp. 156-158.

22 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, pp. 89-91.

6. Men who cause disorder should be punished straight away.[23] That's an advice that could be related to the low discipline and cohesion of the late byzantine armies. Disorder caused panic that led to the breakup of the army, a phenomenon quite common in late Byzantium.
7. Theodore places emphasis on the fact that we should not count on mercenaries. "*Ask foreigners to come to your help but defend yourself by your own forces*". In case of grave threat we can use mercenaries but only under strict conditions.[24] Hiring of large homogenous groups of mercenaries should be avoided, while the use of small groups of different nationalities that speak different languages is preferable.[25] At this point Theodore incorporates the experience of the Catalan affair as well as the experience of the Alan and Turkish mercenaries hired by the Byzantines and proved over and over again untrustworthy.[26]
8. The recruitment of non-combatants should be avoided unless under special conditions, while only a small percentage of the population (about 10%) should be engaged in the operations.[27] During the first decade of the fourteenth century the Byzantines, due to the degradation of their combat forces and probably under the Catalan influence, made some attempts to use common people in the battlefield but with mixed results.[28]
9. In order to mobilize the army, Theodore recommends sending messages and letters.[29] We know that the mustering of the army in Byzantium was achieved by sending letters to the regional commanders or the soldiers. Similar methods were used by the military authorities of the Despotate of Morea.[30]
10. Theodore recommends that the ruler should take care of the arms and armour manufacture and especially promote the art of forging.[31] That could be a reference to the empire's degrading capabilities of military equipment manufacture and strongly reminds us similar recommendations made by cardinal Bessarion nearly 100 years later.[32]

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23 Ibid., p. 49.

24 Ibid., pp. 54-55.

25 Settia, *Esperienza militare*, p. 26.

26 On mercenaries in late Byzantium, see Kyriakidis, *Warfare*, pp. 101-135.

27 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, pp. 57-58.

28 Kanellopoulos/Lekea, 'The Battle of Apros (1305)', pp. 132-135.

29 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, p. 89.

30 Kantakouzenos, vol. 1, p. 136 and vol 2, p. 58. *Chronicle of Tocco*, p. 504.

31 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, p. 56.

32 *Παλαιολόγεια και Πελοποννησιακά*, vol. 4, pp. 32-45. Keller A.G., 'A Byzantine Admirer of 'Western' Progress: Cardinal Bessarion', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 11 (1955), 343-348.

11. Theodore mentions that occasionally the soldiers break the pursuit of the enemy in order to plunder and at that moment they became very vulnerable to an enemy counterattack.[33] Theodore incorporates his own experience in the battle of Quattordio.[34] The situation described was not unknown in Byzantium. In the clash that took place before the battle of Apros (1305) the Byzantines were scattered to plunder the Catalans' livestock and they got a surprise attack.[35] According to the *Chronicle of Morea* that was a common military tactic in the East. A few decades earlier at Tagliacozzo (1266) the troops of Konradin abandoned the pursuit in order to plunder the enemy camp and they got counterattacked by the knights of William II Villehardouin.[36]

Unlike the details Theodore Palaiologos has included concerning the battle tactics, the information on siege warfare is meager and almost exclusively about the attacks against fortified sites. The necessary siege machines and equipment are listed (ladders, siege towers, stone-throwing machines etc) and special emphasis is placed on the use of crossbow, possibly a Genoese influence. If the storming of walls is planned, Theodore suggests that the attackers should move in two waves at the time of the day when the sun rises behind them so that the sunlight would blind the enemy soldiers. The stone-throwing machines should be aimed at behind the walls, on the ramparts and on people and structures within the stronghold. The bombardment should go on day and night.[37] The Byzantine prince seems to recognize the ineffectiveness of the traditional stone-throwing machines against the walls and it is to be expected that since he is writing in the first quarter of the thirteenth century he is unfamiliar with the use of firearms. The effectiveness of the stone-throwing machines had reached a stalemate that was experienced both in the East and the West.

33 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, p. 75.

34 Bargigia, 'Aspetti militari della 'riconquista' del Marchesato', pp. 206-207. Settia, *Esperienza militare*, pp. 20-23.

35 Kanellopoulos/Lekea, 'The Battle of Apros (1305)', pp. 124-125.

36 Kanellopoulos/Lekea, 'Η μάχη του Tagliacozzo', pp. 73-80.

37 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, pp. 102-105. Bastin, 'Le traité de Théodore Paléologue', pp. 86-87. Settia, *Rapine, assedi, battaglie*, p. 132. Settia, *Esperienza militare*, p. 14.

Conclusion

Theodore Palaiologos' primary aim in writing his treatise was to advise his fellow Byzantines and, as a consequence of that he included in his work what, in his view, were the best military practices a ruler could follow in order to prevail in the field of battle. It is well established that Theodore was influenced by his military experience in Italy, so the practices described in his treatise are derived from his participation in the clashes that took place there. As I made clear in this article, the principles of war described by Theodore in his treatise are very similar – if not identical – to Byzantine military practices. Furthermore the drawbacks and difficulties faced by the Byzantines during their military operations, provided Theodore with first rate 'examples to avoid' that he incorporates in the form of pointers. The treatise was translated into Latin and French and we can assume that the text was found to be of some interest to Theodore's Italian subjects and the West, despite the eastern or byzantine influences.[38] Consequently we are facing a phenomenon of intense interaction between Byzantium and the Italian Peninsula in military practice. Perhaps the military tactics of both sides – West and East – have more similarities than we generally thought. It is interesting to note that Theodore makes an early attempt to describe battlefield tactics that include outflanking maneuvres and to this end the footsoldier can be assigned an important role· thus the conventional image of the medieval knight who dominates the battlefield seems questionable.[39]

Conclusively, Theodore's treatise can be considered to lie in the confluence of Eastern and Western military tradition and incorporates the experience of the two worlds. It's a text that substantiates the important similarities between Byzantium and Italy on matters of war, the mutual influence and the diffusion of military tactics and practices during the late middle ages.

Appendix

"And although I do not recommend forming a large number of divisions (*batailles*), occasionally some people use large numbers of divisions, so hoping to menace and

38 There is a strong possibility that many eastern or byzantine elements have been omitted on purpose by the French translator as irrelevant to the western military tradition and practice, see Ross, 'The Prince Answers Back', p. 167.

39 An interesting study on the misunderstandings regarding the 'predominant' role of heavy cavalry in medieval warfare is Burkholder P., 'Popular [Mis]conceptions of Medieval Warfare', *History Compass* 5 (2007), 507-524.

frighten their enemies. But if the enemies are prudent and experienced in matters of war then it is possible to overthrow and put in flight our troops because they will be better ordered to face the attack. So, in my opinion, it is sufficient to have three well positioned and well-ordered divisions; the first division must consist of the best and bravest men who are well equipped, ride the best horses and are experienced in the usage of weapons. The ruler or the head of the army should stand with the second division that is placed behind the first at the distance of a crossbow range; and a shorter distance could be harmful. The third division should be placed on the flank of the second. And if our infantry is not available, the third division should be placed on the left flank of the second, with the purpose that when the first division charges and attacks the opponent and the fighting becomes fierce and then without delay the second division comes to support the first and if the mêlée grows, then the third division should be mixed with the first and the second and attack the right flank of the enemy; because an attack on the enemy flank causes more damage, especially if this unprotected flank (i.e. by a shield) is exposed. In this manner all divisions are gathered together and fight the enemy. And if there are more than three divisions (*batailles*), let's assume four or more, I cannot see how they can be properly organized to fight with their enemies. And they fight much better when they are all grouped together; it is advantageous to be grouped together than divided in many parts as we will show immediately with an example taken from Nature: when a river flow is divided into several parts, outside of the main watercourse, one may more easily cross the divided flow by fords than the united one, because when the river flow is united without being separated, the people cannot cross or ford; it's the same when the divisions are teamed up together.

And if 1000 horsemen are available, 300 should form the first battalion and 200 the second one placed on the left flank and the third battalion is formed by the remaining 500 horsemen with the ruler at their head in order to support the other two. No horseman should stand outside the *batailles* and they should have units under banners known to all, in order to prevent interfering with each other when they are in mêlée. And for the footsoldiers with the rest of the army follow after the horsemen – those who are not *hommes d'armes* (i.e fully equipped knights) – having a banner is of no lesser importance, since this sometimes may discourage the opponent. And arrange your men in this way, depending on the soldiers you have. And if you have footsoldiers recruited from the common people, place them under command of some knights to encourage them during the battle. And if, as has been said, they are placed on the left flank and especially if they are armed with bows, crossbows and javelins and keep shooting on the enemy right flank and cause injuries and kill them and their horses, then at the peak of the battle they can provide relief and support (to the mounted men) and achieve superiority over the enemy that will lead to the victory. But, the knights I mentioned earlier, if you have a lot of them, do not place them on the left

flank, but I advise you to arrange them in front of the right flank, i.e. in front of the second battalion of knights, so at some point they can participate into the fight. And thus the easiest victory can be achieved. The 'force multiplier' of those who fight valiantly together truly demonstrates that it is possible to have the victory without large numbers of fighting men, and in this way: if the first battalion collapses, the second one follows in the disaster and so everyone lose heart and takes flight. And so it happens like lances, because when in danger, one is no use, who cannot destroy it? But when two or three can be put and bound together, no human strength can tear them apart."[40]

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40 Théodore Paléologue, *Enseignements*, pp. 92-93.

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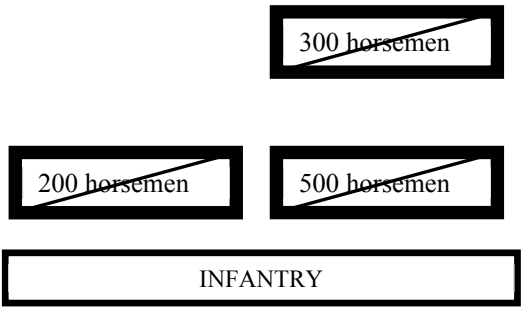

FIGURE 13.1
Order of Battle according to Theodore Palaiologos

CHAPTER 14

Warfare in the *Histories* of John Kantakouzenos

Savvas Kyriakidis

The purpose of this paper is to examine the descriptions of military operations that can be found in the *Histories* of the *megas domestikos* and emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1347-54). The discussion of Kantakouzenos' accounts of military operations contributes to the better understanding of his military thinking and provides a better insight to the nature of military conflicts in the Byzantine world in the first half of the fourteenth century.

John VI Kantakouzenos is the only late Byzantine emperor who wrote a narrative of the political and military events of his period. His *Histories* cover the period 1320-1356, though some events, such as the temporary capture of Anhialos and Mesembria by John V Palaiologos (1341-91) date in the 1360s.[1] Modern scholars describe the *Histories* either as an apologetic work for Kantakouzenos' role in the civil wars of the fourteenth century which ruined Byzantium, or as memoirs.[2] Regardless whether the distinction between memoirs and historiography can be applied in this case, Kantakouzenos' agenda is easily discernible. He wanted to justify and explain his involvement in the civil wars and portray himself as a defender of the dynastic rights of the emperors of the Palaiologan dynasty.[3] Kantakouzenos supported and financed the rebellion of Andronikos III Palaiologos (1328-41) against his grandfather Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282-28). This rebellion led to a civil war which was fought intermittently from 1321 until 1328 and resulted in the deposition of the elder Andronikos. Kantakouzenos became the closest associate of Andronikos III, whose sudden death in 1341 caused a catastrophic civil war between Kantakouzenos, who claimed to be the rightful regent of the deceased emperor's son John V Palaiologos, and the regency which was established in Constantinople and was led by Alexios Apokaukos, the patriarch John Kalekas and the widow of the deceased emperor, Anna of Savoy. In 1347, Kantakouzenos and his clan emerged victorious. However, Kantakouzenos ruled over an impoverished, disintegrated and fragmented state.

1 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, III, pp. 100-03, 362.

2 Angelou, 'Duplicity and Subversion', p. 263.

3 Dölger, 'Johannes VI Kantakouzenos als dynastischer Legitimist', pp. 19-30.

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The *Histories* is one of the most important sources for the study of fourteenth-century Byzantium. Therefore, it is not surprising that a large number of studies dealing with the social, economic and political developments of the period rely on Kantakouzenos' testimony.[4] Moreover, the lack of surviving Byzantine military manuals, which are indispensable for the study of Byzantine warfare from the sixth through the eleventh centuries, led modern scholars to view Kantakouzenos as the most important source for the study of the military history of the later Byzantine empire.[5] Kantakouzenos was in an ideal position to provide information for military matters. He participated in almost all the military operations he describes and before his accession to the throne he held the office of *megas domestikos*, the holder of which was the head of the Byzantine army.[6] Consequently, he possessed a firsthand knowledge of the military organization of the empire, the composition of its armies and the tactics they followed on the battlefield. However, that he was an eyewitness author does not mean that the information he provides is reliable. His aim was neither to write a military manual, which would contain practical advice to military leaders, nor to provide an accurate record of the history of his time. Instead, Kantakouzenos wishes to reconstruct the events he describes and present them in the best possible light. Moreover, although the *Histories* is one of the longest pieces of historiography Byzantine literature ever produced, military matters cover a relatively small part of Kantakouzenos' narrative.

Kantakouzenos affords the modern reader limited and incidental information about the military operations he describes. The length he dedicates to describe military events is irrelevant to their importance. For instance, he describes in length the sieges he led in Beroia, Edessa and Servia in 1350. These were short and small-scale operations. On the contrary, he provides a rather summary account of the large-scale siege of Philippoupolis which was conducted by Andronikos III in 1323 and lasted four months.[7] Oftentimes, Kantakouzenos's accounts of military conflicts focus on a particular event

4 For studies on the *Histories* of Kantakouzenos see Loenerz, 'Ordre et désordre', 222-37; Weiss, *Johannes Kantakuzenos-Aristokrat, Staatatsman, Kaiser und Mönch;* Kyrris, 'John Cantacuzene, the Genoese, the Venetians and the Catalans,' 331-56; Kazhdan, 'L'Histoire de Cantacuzène en tant qu' oevre littéraire', 279-35; Hunger, 'Thukydides bei Johannes Kantakouzenos', 181-93; Miller, 'The Plague in John VI Cantacuzenos and Thucydides', 385-95; For a biography of Kantakouzenos see, Weills, *Johannes Kantakuzenos-Aristokrat, Staatatsman, Kaiser und Mönch*; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor.*

5 Bartusis, *The Late Byzantine Army*, p. 11; Kyriakidis, *Warfare in Late Byzantium*, pp. 4-5.

6 For the *megas domestikos* see Guilland, *Recherches sur les institutions byzantins*, I, pp. 405-25; Kyriakidis, 'The role of the *megas domestikos* in the late Byzantine army', 241-58.

7 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, III, pp. 119-31, I, 173-74.

which he deemed worthy to mention, either because he viewed it as important, or it attracted his attention because it was uncommon. This is a common occurrence in his account of sieges. For instance, the description of the siege of Philippoupolis concentrates on the use of a siege tower, the construction of which was supervised by a German mercenary, while the description of the siege of Thessalonica by Kantakouzenos' troops in 1342 is limited to the statement that although the besiegers used a wheeled siege engine, the so- called tortoise the siege failed. He says nothing about the exact nature, use and impact of this siege weapon. Similarly, Kanakouzenos relates that in 1335 the Byzantines besieged Phokaia, which was under the rule of the Genoese lord Domenico Catanea, for five months. He states that many wall battles were fought and the Byzantines used a *helepolis* and other engines which were invented for the capture of cities.[8] In another example, Kantakouzenos' account of the siege of Peritheorion in 1342 is limited to the statement that it lasted twenty-four days and although they used ladders and other siege engines, Kantakouzenos' forces failed to capture it.[9]

Furthermore, Kantakouzenos employed descriptions of sieges in order to emphasize his personal influence on the military successes of Andronikos III. To achieve this Kantakouzenos included in his work lengthy speeches and exchanges he had with leading figures of the enemy forces. These pieces of rhetoric provided Kantakouzenos with the opportunity to display his knowledge of siege warfare. For instance, in his talk with a leader of the defenders of Phokaia Kantakouzenos remarked that there are three things which could save the besieged. The intervention of allies, the abundance of supplies and the inability of the besiegers to continue the siege due to lack of supplies, or due to lack of necessary courage or due to another reason. To persuade them to surrender Kantakouzenos threatens the people of Phokaia stating that the emperor would confiscate their properties as a compensation for the expenses he undertook during the campaign. He also reminded the Phokaians that the Byzantines had destroyed their agricultural production and that they should not expect any income through commerce since the Byzantines had taken over control over the sea routes.[10] Kanakouzenos used more or less the same argu-

8 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, pp. 214, I, 476-81. It is probably that the *helepolis* used in Phokaia was an artillery weapon and not a siege tower. In the siege of Philippooupolis Kantakouzenos identifies the siege tower as *pyrgos*.

9 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, pp. 197-98, 305, 334. For a brief discussion of siege warfare in Kantakouzenos see Kyriakidis, *Warfare in Late Byzantium*, pp. 178-86.

10 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 484-90.

ments in his attempt to convince the defenders of Arta and Rogo to surrender to the imperial army. He emphasized that the Byzantine army had destroyed the countryside and the agricultural production and threaten to sell their inhabitants as slaves. Nevertheless, to induce them to surrender he promised that the emperor was ready to grant them generous privileges if they surrendered.[11]

A useful insight into the value of the *Histories* as a source of military history is provided by the analysis of the description of the battles of Pelekanos-Philokrene and Rosokastron. Kantakouzenos' account of the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene is among the lengthiest descriptions of military encounter provided by Byzantine historians. However, much of it focuses not on the actual fighting, but on deliberations regarding the movements of the army and on lengthy speeches made by the protagonists, which is one of the most striking features of the *Histories*.

The battle was fought in June 1329 between the Byzantines under Andronikos III and the Ottoman Turks who were led by their ruler Orhan (1326-62). Kantakouzenos participated in this military operation in his capacity as *megas domestikos*. Generally modern scholarship does not question the accuracy and reliability of his account. Moreover, scholars in the past tended to emphasize the significance of the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene and saw it as an attempt to remove the Ottomans from Bithynia. Its importance has also been compared with that of the Byzantine defeat at the hands of the Seljuks in the famous battle of Manzikert in 1071.[12] Although there can be no comparison in terms of scale and the size of the armies involved, it is possible that this comparison is influenced by the similarities between them. Both battles were fought on the eastern frontier against Turks, Andronikos III's injury led many soldiers to believe that he was killed and as a result the army was routed, and Kantakouzenos implies that treachery was one of the main factors who led to the Byzantine defeat.

One wonders whether Kantakouzenos tried consciously to connect Andronikos III to Nikephoros IV Diogenes, a ruler who had tried to restore Byzantine control over the eastern frontier, in order to emphasize the importance of this battle and exonerate the emperor and himself from any accusation that their tactics led to the Byzantine defeat. In both battles the emperor was falsely thought dead and was allegedly betrayed by supporters of their competitors. This suggestion implies that Kantakouzenos was either aware of

11 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 517-22.

12 Bosch, *Kaiser Andronikos III Palaiologos*, pp. 152-58; Iorga, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, pp. 165-67; Arnakis-Georgiadis, *Οι Πρώτοι Οθωμανοί*, pp. 177-87; Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, pp. 169-70.

stories about Mantzikert or sources such as the *History* of Michael Attaleiates were available to him. It seems impossible to know whether Kantakouzenos wished to connect the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene to the Byzantine defeat at Mantzikert. Nonetheless, it is probable that the main reason why he describes this battle at length is his wish to demonstrate that one of the main concerns of Andronikos III once he ascended the throne was to thwart the Ottoman advance in Anatolia and to criticize Andronikos II of being unable to defend the remaining Byzantine possessions in Asia.[13]

The course and outcome of the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene have been repeatedly discussed by modern scholars.[14] Nonetheless, for the purposes of this study it is essential to examine critically the main events of the battle as they are recorded in the *Histories*. Kantakouzenos relates that when the Byzantines reached Pelekanos, the Ottomans had already captured the surrounding hills and occupied strong points which were difficult to reach. Orhan had also placed part of his army in ambushes.[15] He repeatedly detached cavalry archers to entice the Byzantines into undisciplined charge. However, the Ottomans failed to break the discipline and order of the Byzantines. The soldiers who were sent by Andronikos III to face the Ottomans were instructed to advance in close order as to avoid being drawn over to the Ottoman ambushes.[16] Then Orhan ordered a full-scale attack. The Byzantines fend it off and carried out a counterattack, killing many Turks.[17] However, if we believe Kantakouzenos, the rugged and broken ground prevented the Byzantines from attacking and encircling their enemy. Consequently, they decided to retreat.[18]

Kantakouzenos claims that the decision to retreat was not an admission of defeat. In a lengthy speech he is supposed to have made in a war council held by the emperor Kantakouzenos explains why the Byzantines were victorious; the Ottomans did not dare to face them in a pitched battle and did not even harass the servants of the Byzantine soldiers, when they were sent to collect fodder. In addition, the Byzantines had lost only one soldier and the Ottomans 400.[19] It seems unlikely that someone who portrayed himself as an experienced military leader really believed that the Byzantines were victorious because the Ottomans suffered more casualties and did not face the Byzantine in pitched

13 Kyriakidis, 'Byzantine responses", p. 85.

14 Kyriakidis, 'Byzantine responses", 83-97; Bosch, *Kaiser Andronikos III Palaiologos*, pp. 152-58.

15 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 343-45.

16 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 347.

17 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 349-50.

18 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 348.

19 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 350-52.

battle. Kantakouzenos conceals the fact that the Ottomans would not abandon their advantageous position and risk battle. Trying to shift responsibility from himself and Andronikos III for the Byzantine defeat, Kantakouzenos attributes the Ottoman victory to the lack of discipline of young soldiers and of a group of low quality troops, who contrary to the emperor's orders, hastily attacked the enemy. Kantakouzenos also accuses unidentified supporters of Andronikos II of undermining the Byzantine army by spreading the rumour that Andronikos III, who was wounded in the battle, was killed. As a result the retreat of the Byzantines turned into a route.[20]

Kantakouzenos' description of the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene is contradicted and complemented by the *Roman History* of Nikephoros Gregoras. It is probable that, when Kantakouzenos was writing his *Histories,* he was aware of Gregoras' work.[21] Therefore, it is likely that when Kantakouzenos presents a different version of events, he consciously responds to remarks made by Gregoras. However, Gregoras' account should be treated cautiously. He was a supporter of Andronikos II and a critic of the military leadership and style of government of Andronikos III. Consequently, his statement that most of the Byzantine soldiers who fought at Pelekanos were vulgar peasants should not be taken literally.[22] Moreover, while Kantakouzenos claims that the Byzantines successfully pushed back numerous attacks carried out by the Ottoman cavalry archers, Gregoras comments that Andronikos III was advised by experienced commanders not to send any troops against the Ottoman horsemen, whose feigned retreats aimed to draw the Byzantines over to rough ground where ambuscades had been prepared.[23] Therefore, Gregoras remarks that it was a mistake to order heavy cavalry soldiers attack the Ottoman light cavalry, whereas Kantakouzenos claims that himself and Andronikos III were aware of the reliance of the Ottomans on light cavalry archers and on feigned retreats and therefore, they had asked their troops not to pursue them recklessly. One wonders whether Kantakouzenos' statements that the emperor instructed his troops to charge the Ottoman light cavalry in close order and that they did not fail into the enemy ambushes were a response to criticism directed against Andronikos III which is reflects in Gregoras.

According to Gregoras, the Byzantines decided to retreat to avoid fighting against the Ottomans at night in an area with which they were not familiar.[24]

20 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 352-54, 362-63.

21 Kyritses, *The Byzantine aristocracy*, pp. 333-34.

22 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, I, p. 433.

23 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, I, p. 434.

24 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, I, p. 435.

This is a sensible action and indicates prudent military thinking. However, it did not serve Kantakouzenos' purpose to show that it was the Ottomans who avoided fighting not the Byzantines. Gregoras does not confirm Kantakouzenos' claim that supporters of the deposed Andronikos II intentionally spread the rumor that Andronikos III was dead. Gregoras remarks that when the emperor was wounded, he rushed to the fortress of Philokrene. However, believing that the emperor speeded up his pace because of cowardice the soldiers panicked.[25] Kantakouzenos' statement that supporters of Andronikos II had intentionally spread the rumor that the emperor was dead should be seen as an attempt to vilify the elder emperor. His claim that after his return to Constantinople the emperor decided not to punish the culprits indicates that the allegation against the supposed supporters of the elder emperor was fabrication the purpose of which was to vilify the elder and deposed emperor and blame him for the Byzantine defeat. Nonetheless, it promotes Andronikos III's profile as a philanthropic emperor, who adheres to one of the most important tenets of imperial ideology.[26]

Kantakouzenos' description of the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene gives the impression that the Ottoman army relied exclusively on cavalry archers. Thirteenth and fourteenth-century Byzantine historians emphasize the reliance of the forces of the various Turcoman principalities on the mobility of cavalry archers who were able to entice the Byzantine heavy cavalrymen into undisciplined exhaustive charges and ambush them. If we believe Kantakouzenos' testimony, the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene is one of the rare accounts of battle indicating that the Byzantines were able to face the Turkish light cavalrymen effectively. One could argue that Kantakouzenos and Andronikos III were aware of the tactics of the Ottomans, knew how to deal with them and they were able to impose the proper discipline on their soldiers to follow their instructions and not to fall to the enemy ambushes. It is possible that the Byzantine military leadership was aware of the previous defeats of the Byzantine armies at the hands of the Turks and Kantakouzenos remarks that before marching against the Ottomans, Andronikos III sought the advice of the governor of Mesothynia, Kontophre who knew the customs and manners of the Turks and was experienced in the wars against them.[27]

On the other hand, Kantakouzenos' account of the fighting techniques of the enemy light cavalry is in agreement with the instructions provided by the military treatises of the previous centuries, mainly the *Strategikon* of the

25 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, I, p. 435.

26 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 359, 363.

27 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, 341.

emperor Maurice (582-602) and the *Taktika* of the emperor Leo VI (886-912).[28] This raises the question whether Kantakouzenos is consciously trying to adhere to established percepts which can be found in military manuals in order to demonstrate his military brilliance.[29] The need to consult military manuals had been emphasized by Byzantine authors long before Kantakouzenos compiled his work. In a treatise on imperial expeditions the emperor Constantine VII (912-959) advises generals to read books of military strategy and siege warfare particularly the books of Polyainos and Syrianus.[30] Michael Psellos relates that the soldier-emperor Basil II (976-1025) gained his knowledge of military tactics partly from his own experience and partly from the books he read, while the general John Doukas learnt strategy and tactics from the *Taktika* of Aelian and Apollodorus and other ancient military works. Similarly, another soldier-emperor, Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) is said to have consulted Aelian.[31] Kantakouzenos does not make any allusion or reference to any treatise he might used in order to compose his descriptions of battle. This does not mean that he had not consulted military manuals. It should not be forgotten that the manuscript tradition indicates that military manuals, such as the *Taktika* of Leo VI, were widely circulated in the later Byzantine period. It could also be argued that he did not need to adhere to the dictates of treatises to possess theoretical knowledge of the fighting techniques of the enemy, since the late Byzantine commanders faced similar challenges to their ancestors, such as attacks from light cavalry archers.[32] Nevertheless, even if it is accepted that they possessed the necessary theoretical knowledge to deal with the fighting techniques of the Turks effectively, this does not mean that Kantakouzenos and Andronikos III were able to persuade their troops to follow their instructions.

The battle of Rosokastron was fought in 1332 between the Byzantines who were led by Andronikos III and the Bulgarians under John Alexander (1331-71). Kantakouzenos and Gregoras provide two conflicting accounts of this battle.

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28 *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, ed. Dennis, 11.2; *The Taktika of Leo VI*, ed. Dennis, 18.43-72; Kyriakidis, 'Byzantine responses', p. 85.

29 For a discussion how historians used military treatises to promote their agenda in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries see Holmes, *Basil II and the Governance of Empire,* pp. 284-86.

30 Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *Three treatises on imperial military expeditions*, ed. Haldon, p. 106.

31 Michael Psellos,*Chronographia*, ed. Renauld, I, pp. 20-21, II, 181; Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, eds. Reinsch-Kambylis, 15.3.6.

32 Kyriakidis, 'Byzantine responses,' pp. 89-90.

According to Kantakouzenos, Andronikos III invaded Bulgaria to seize towns and fortresses which legitimately belonged to the Byzantine state. When the Bulgarian ruler heard that the Byzantines had invaded his possessions, he assembled his army and reached the fortress of Aetos, which was not far from Rosokastron, where the Byzantines had set up camp. Both rulers deployed their armies and were ready to fight. However, Kantakouzenos remarks that the Byzantines could not attack the enemy because the ground through which they had to march was broken and narrow. Andronikos III and John Alexander redeployed their armies the following day. Kantakouzenos claims that this time it was the Bulgarians who did not dare to face the Byzantines in a pitched battle. Therefore, Kantakouzenos attributes the inability of the Byzantines to launch an attack on their enemy at Pelekanos and at Rosokastron to the topographical setting of the battlefield and points out that the enemy did not dare to face the Byzantines in the open. As is the case with the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene, the Byzantine retreat is painted as victory. Since the Bulgarians would not engage in battle, the emperor returned to his camp pleased to have inflicted terror on the enemy ruler who had sent an embassy to negotiate a peace agreement.[33]

As is the case with Kantakouzenos' narrative of the battle of Pelekanos, treachery was again one of the main reasons why the Byzantines were defeated. According to Kantakouzenos, while John Alexander was negotiating a peace agreement with Andronikos III, he secretly received reinforcements to launch a surprise attack against the Byzantines. Believing that peace was secured the Byzantine emperor disbanded a good part of his army.[34] Furthermore, Kantakouzenos describes vividly how moments before the battle the Byzantines were caught by surprise, when they realized that a Tatar force had just arrived to reinforce the Bulgarians. As he writes:

> thinking that the battle was against the Bulgarians only, the Byzantines attacked them with courage. However, while the Byzantines were heading towards the Bulgarians, the Scythian horn was heard. It did not sound like the previous times, but it sounded something wild and discordant which has the strength to stir up the barbarians.[35]

Kantakouzenos relates that the Tatars were not deployed together with the Bulgarians and they attacked the rear of the Byzantine army and put them to

33 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 463-64.

34 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 461.

35 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 465.

flight. However, the emperor together with the units around him did not retreat and continued his march against the Bulgarians. Kantakouzenos states that a long battle followed and the Byzantines displayed great courage and dare. Eventually, being vastly outnumbered they were forced to retreat. Kantakouzenos points out that the emperor retreated to Rosokastron in an orderly manner.[36] Even if Kantakouzenos' account is accurate, it reveals that Andronikos III was not cautious enough and was easily deceived by the stratagem of the enemy ruler. For instance, the author of Leo's *Taktika* writes that generals should not allow themselves being lulled in to carelessness by the temporary cease of hostilities and become negligent before the conclusion of a firm peace.[37]

It is plausible that Kantakouzenos' remarks that the battle was fought unexpectedly because the Bulgarian ruler did not keep his word and that the army withdrew in an orderly manner is a response to criticism directed against Andronikos III for his conduct during this conflict. It is likely that this criticism is reflected in Gregoras' description of the battle of Rosokastron. Gregoras relates that Andronikos III launched an undeclared war against John Alexander. Contrary to Kantakouzenos, Gregoras writes that the emperors exchanged embassies while John Alexander was still at his capital, Trnovo, and not on the eve of the battle. During the negotiations the Bulgarian ruler assembled his forces and reinforced them with Tatars. Although it took him five days to reach the Byzantines, Andronikos III was completely unprepared to face the enemy. Gregoras, remarks that the Byzantines were routed and found refuge in the fortress of Rosokastro where they shut themselves in. Eventually, the Bulgarian emperor showed mercy and accepted a truce with the Byzantines who were allowed to return to Byzantium.[38] Consequently, Gregoras and Kantakouzenos provide conflicting descriptions of the battle of Rosokastron. Both of them should be treated cautiously. Kantakouzenos wishes to demonstrate that the army was defeated because the Bulgarians violated their agreements, while, Gregoras, who was critic of Andronikos III, might have exaggerated the gravity of the Byzantine defeat.

Kantakouzenos was present in both Pelekanos-Philokrene and Rosokastron. However, his account of these battles should be treated rather cautiously. Nevertheless, they provide useful insights into Kantakouzenos' military thinking.

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36 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 465-66.

37 *The Taktika of Leo VI*, ed. Dennis, 20.39

38 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, I, pp. 484-88.

In both battles Kantakouzenos attributes the inability of the Byzantines to attack their enemies to the nature of the battlefield. This might be a fabrication to justify the ineffectiveness of the Byzantine army. Nonetheless, it demonstrates that he saw the geographical context as an important factor that affected the outcome of battles. Describing a battle against raiders from the Turcoman emirate of Aydın in 1331, Kantakouzenos remarks that the Byzantines led by Andronikos III sough to engage in battle for the terrain was flat and appropriate for heavy cavalry maneuvers.[39] In 1338, the Byzantines made effective use of the light infantry troops from Aydın against the Albanians. Kantakouzenos comments that the mountainous terrain prevented the deployment of cavalry. Eventually, the light infantrymen sent by the ruler of Aydın, Umur to Andronikos III crushed the Albanians.[40]

Kantakouzenos points out the importance of exploiting the topographical setting of the battlefield in accounts of battles he did not participate. In his description of the battle of Stephaniana near Zichne, where in May 1344 an army from the emirate of Aydın defeated the troops of the Serbian general Gregory Preljub, Kantakouzenos relates that because the ground was flat the Turks withdrew to the nearby hills to avoid being attacked by the Serbian heavy cavalry. Seeing that they could not use their horses, the Serbians dismounted, left their horses unattended and ascended the hill carrying their heavy armour. Kantakouzenos is rather critical of this move and concludes that the Turks moved quickly towards the unguarded horses of the Serbians and captured them. Subsequently, the Serbians were encircled and slaughtered.[41] One wonders how a distinguished general such as Gregory Preljub could have made such a blunder. He was the conqueror of Thessaly and Kantakouzenos relates that the Serbian emperor, Stefan Dušan (1331-1355) view him as the most prominent of his military commanders.[42] It is likely that Kantakouzenos' account of this battle is distorted in order to demonstrate the supposed incompetence of the Serbian general. Envy might have played a role. Preljub had conquered Thessaly from the Byzantines and in 1350 he had successfully defended the city of Servia against Kantakouzenos.[43] In another instance, describing the victory of his associate George Phakrases over Dobrotiç towards the end of the civil

39 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 470-71.

40 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 496.

41 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 423.

42 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 423.

43 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, III, pp. 130-33.

war in 1347, Kantakouzenos comments that Dobrotiç proved to be a bad general for he sent his cavalry to fight in vineyards and ditches.[44]

Moreover, the battles of Pelekanos-Philokrene and Rosokastron provide an insight into Kantakouzenos' ideas about the role of the general during battle. Kantakouzenos implies that neither the emperor, nor the *megas domestikos* were supposed to take part in the fighting. However, they were forced to do so. In Pelekanos, the emperor was involved in the fighting only when the Ottomans launched a large-scale attack led by Orhan's brother Pazarlı.[45] In Rosokastron, Andronikos III and Kantakouzenos were forced to fight because their army was caught by surprise and was routed. In Pelekanos-Philokrene Andronikos III is portrayed as a commander who possesses all the qualities a military leader ought to have.[46] Before ordering his troops to advance against the attacking Ottomans, the emperor delivered a battle exhortation which bolstered the fighting spirit of his troops and included most of the *topoi* that can be found in pre-battle speeches. He exhorted his troops to emulate the achievements of their ancestors; he reminded them that they are not inferior to their enemy and that they are fighting for freedom and for the restoration of the injustices the Byzantines had suffered at the hands of the barbarians. Andronikos III declared that he would not fight together with his troops. Instead, he would direct the battle from a distance and will reward those who would fight gallantly and punish the ones who would prove themselves bad soldiers. The emperor concludes his orations by giving his soldiers detailed tactical instruction on how to face the Ottomans.[47] When Andronikos III finished his address, his soldiers made obeisance (*proskynesis*) to the emperor declaring that they would either achieve a good victory or will die gloriously. They armed themselves with the cross and marched on the enemy.[48]

The image of Andronikos as a leader who lifts the spirits of his troops through a pre-battle speech, his tactical instructions and his decision not to engage personally in the fighting fully adheres to Byzantine theoretical percepts regarding military leadership. This portrayal of the emperor together

44 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 585.

45 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 349.

46 For battle speeches in Byzantium see Markopoulos, 'Ideology of War', 47-56; McGeer, 'Two Military Orations', 111-35.

47 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 344-46. The notion that the general should exhort his men before the battle appears in Byzantine military treatises. *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, ed. Dennis, 11.2 7.4; *The Taktika of Leo VI*, ed. Dennis, 2.12; Dennis, *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*, p. 230; *La traité sur la guerrilla* (*De velitatione*) *de l' empereur Nicéphore Phokas* (*963-969*), eds. Dragon/ Mihăescu, XXIII.

48 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur I, p. 347.

with the claim that his troops performed the *proskynisis* is an attempt to legitimize Andronikos III's claim to the throne. It should not be forgotten that Kantakouzenos connects proper imperial ceremony with legitimacy and his *Histories* emphasize the ceremonial and ideological role of the imperil office, something which is reflected in the aforementioned description of the emperor's role during the battle of Pelekanos-Philokrene.

On the other hand, Kantakouzenos included in his work accounts of battle which focus on the heroic exploits of Kantakouzenos himself and Andronikos III. These are mostly short accounts of battle against Turkish raiders in Thrace. The account of a battle against a Turkish army which was plundering villages around Lipikos Mountain in 1326 provides a characteristic example. On his way from Constantinople to the city of Didymoteichon, Andronikos III heard that a group of Turkish raiders was ravaging the villages around Lipikos Mountain. Without providing any details Kantakouzenos relates that the emperor risked his life, was wounded and his horse died. Kantakouzenos describes in detail his personal heroic deeds. He was surrounded by a large number of enemy soldiers and was almost killed. His horse was badly wounded. Although his thighs and arms were not covered by armour, Kantakouzenos was able to protect himself from the blows of the spears, arrows and stones that were launched by the enemy. His sword was grabbed by enemy soldiers and his clothes were ripped. Kantakouzenos concludes that he was miraculously saved.[49] This battle against the Turks is mentioned by Gregoras who ascertains that the emperor was wounded. It is interesting that he comments that at the time the battle was fought, the eastern frontier in Bithynia had been neglected and Prusa was captured by the Ottomans.[50] Consequently, it is likely that by emphasizing this victory against the Turks, Kantakouzenos responds to the criticism that he and Andronikos III had neglected the defenses of the empire.

The account of a victory against Ottoman raiders around Constantinople in 1337 focuses on the emperor's determination to fight the Turks. When Andronikos III heard that the Ottomans had prepared a fleet to attack villages around Constantinople, he ordered Kantakouzenos to assemble as many soldiers as possible and fight the Ottomans who were divided into two groups and plundered coastal villages around Constantinople. Andronikos III would lead the fleet and attack the Turks by sea. Kantakouzenos followed the moves of the first group of the Ottoman raiders, took them by surprise and only seven of them escaped with their lives. When the emperor arrived he was eager to

49 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 206-07.

50 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, I, p. 384.

pursue the rest of the Ottomans. However, because none the imperial horses was around, he rode the *megas domestikos*' horse.[51] In three other instances, Kantakouzenos reports the itinerary followed by the emperor, the number of the Turkish raiders and his report of the battle is confined to the statement that the emperor killed most of the enemy soldiers and the survivors were captured.[52]

Accounts of battle extolling heroic individualism become scarce after the death of Andronikos III. In a rare example, Kantakouzenos relates that in 1343, himself and a small group of his followers were ambushed by the brigand Momcilo in the ruins of the city of Mesene in Thrace. Kantakouzenos writes that he was forced to fight against a large number of enemies who threw him from his horse. His armed servant, Lantzaretos gave him his horse to mount. When he mounted Lantzaretos' horse, Kantakouzenos received a blow from the sword of an enemy soldier. However, he was protected by his helmet and suffered no injury. Kantakouzenos concludes that was able to fight his way to Koumoutzena inflicting and receiving many blows.[53]

It is reasonable to conclude that by extolling his own and Andronikos III's valour, mostly in battles against Turkish armies in the period 1321-41, Kantakouzenos responds to criticism directed against the government of Andronikos III that it failed to thwart the expansion of the Turks. Moreover, it provided Kantakouzenos with the opportunity to criticize Andronikos II whom Kantakouzenos portrays as ignorant in matters of war and as a ruler who neglected the defense of the empire.[54] It is also likely that by emphasizing the martial virtues of the younger Andronikos and himself in battles against the Turks in Thrace, Kantakouzenos indirectly criticizes John V, despite the positive comments he makes about his personality and military skills.[55] When Kantakouzenos completed his *Histories* in the late 1360s the Ottomans were establishing themselves in Thrace and conquered important cities such as Adrianople and Didymoteichon which feature prominently in Kantakouzenos' work.[56]

The emphasis on the exploits of leading members of the aristocracy was not a fourteenth-century development. It began in the tenth century and reflects the emergence of a military aristocracy.[57] Although the political and military

51 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 505-07.

52 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 390-91, 427, 435-36.

53 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 431.

54 Kyriakidis, 'Warfare and Propaganda', 176-189.

55 Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, III, pp. 9, 17, 53.

56 On the dating of the *Histories* Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I, p. 469; Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos,* p. 100.

57 Kazhdan, 'The Aristocracy and the Imperial Ideal', 43-57.

context had changed dramatically, the Byzantine aristocracy in the fourteenth century was predominately military in character. Kantakouzenos was a leading member of the social elite which had adopted an ideal of heroic individualism, which was displayed through daring acts against the enemy, couple with excellence in physical activities such as horsemanship and hunting. Meanwhile, the imperial office was heavily militarized and in the later Byzantine period the military virtues of the emperors were emphasized more intensively than in the past.[58] Consequently, apart from serving Kantakouzenos' personal agenda, accounts of battle which extol his own and Andronikos III's exploits meet the expectations of their aristocratic audience and legitimize their claim to the throne. Kantakouzenos makes it clear that military competence was an essential requirement for the imperial office. In 1320, he protested the inclusion of Michael Katharos in the line of succession was that he lacked military training and experience. He claims that when Andronikos III fell seriously ill in 1329, it was necessary for the empire to be led by a great and experienced general. In his account of the deliberations following Andronikos III's in 1341, Kantakouzenos relates that Alexios Apokaukos had recommended Andronikos Asan to become an emperor due to his valour and experience in was and his illustrious ancestry.[59]

Furthermore, military skills are an important criterion for Kantakouzenos to evaluate friends and enemies alike. Kantakouenos writes that together with the leading general Syrgiannes, they were taught the art of war by his uncle, John Angelos Synadenos who was superior to all contemporary generals and could be among the best of the generals of the past who are celebrated in the works of Roman authors.[60] Unlike most generals of the period, Manuel Tgaris was of a low and not illustrious birth. However, as Kantakouzenos remarks, he displayed great bravery and excelled himself in the wars against the Turks.[61] Similarly, the semi-independent Serbian lord Chrelja, who played an important role in the civil war of 1341-1347, is identified as very powerful man who commanded a large army and was a very experienced warrior.[62] In another example, Senachereim Monomachos, who fought against Kantakouzenos in the civil war of 1341-1347, is called a prudent man and a military commander

58 See Kyriakidis, *Warfare in Late Byzantium*, pp. 45-48; Angelov, *Imperial Ideology*, p. 83.

59 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 15, 425, II, 115. For the late Byzantine aristocracy see Laiou, "The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Palaiologan Period", 131-151; Stathakopoulos, "Scholarship on the Palaiologan Aristocracy", 92-101.

60 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 333-334; Nicol (*The Reluctant Emperor*, p. 17) identifies Kantakouzenos' uncle as John Angelos Palaiologos.

61 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 91.

62 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, pp. 232-33.

who was not inferior to his contemporary generals and for that reason he had won the favour of Andronikos III who had trusted him with the command of many military operations.[63] Monomachos is one of the extremely few individuals who belonged to the camp of Kantakouzenos' enemies and are treated favourably in his *Histories*. It is possible that this reflects the fact that, unlike the leaders of the regency of John V, Monomachos shared a similar military background to Kantakouzenos.

If we want to compare Kantakouzenos' accounts of battle which extol the heroic achievements of his protagonists and those of earlier historians, the first thing we note is that Kantakouzenos' narrative lacks the epic heroization that can be found in earlier authors. For instance, unlike the heroes of middle Byzantine historians, Kantakouzenos' protagonists are not engaged in single combat against leading enemy figures. Kantakouzenos, makes a single reference to a single combat which was not in a battle situation and was never fought. In 1323, the Bulgarian ruler Michael Šišman raided Byzantine territories in Thrace. Kantakouzenos reports that the raid did not cause any damage because special care had been taken and the villagers were protected inside fortresses and cities. However, wishing to promote the valour of Andronikos III, Kantakouzenos states that the emperor challenged Michael Šišman to single combat. Unsurprisingly, the Bulgarian emperor did not accept the challenge claiming that stupid would be the blacksmith who instead of taking the hot iron with pinches takes it with his hands. He himself would be ridiculed by the Bulgarians if he risks not his large and strong army but his own body.[64] This response aimed at portraying the Bulgarian ruler as someone who lacked Andronikos III's daring spirit and courage. It is probable that Andronikos III never challenged Michael Šišman to a duel and that the whole episode is one of Kantakouzenos' fabrications which emphasize Andronikos III's profile as a dedicated warrior and legitimize his seizure of the throne. Similarly, unlike the historians of the middle period Kantaouzenos does not make any allusions and references to Homeric epic in his battle accounts. This could be attributed to the fact that unlike the middle Byzantine period, the political and military climate in the fourteenth century did not favour an epic revival similar to that of the period from the tenth to the twelfth centuries.[65]

The emphasis on the exploits on the battlefield and the personal participation of the emperor and general in the actual fighting raise the question of the

63 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 368.

64 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, pp. 179-80.

65 For epic revival before the thirteenth century see Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, pp. 225-16; Bazzani, "The historical poems of Theodore Prodromos", pp. 222-25.

conflict between aristocratic notions of heroism, which dictated that a general risk his life on the field and military theory which discouraged military commanders from taking risks. Following the sixth-century *Strategikon* of Maurice, the tenth-century *Taktika* of Leo VI comments that hand-to-hand fighting with the enemy was the role of the soldier; not of the general, who should make all proper arrangements and station himself in a suitable location from which he can observe his troops.[66] Examples indicating the conflict between reckless heroism and military theory can be found in narrative histories of the previous centuries. The best known example is the fate of the *patrikios* Leo who was the commander of Adrianople in 921. Though he was known as 'Moroleon' (foolish Leo), *Theophanes Continuatus* considers the name 'Thymoleon' (courageous Leo) appropriate, emphasizing that he displayed bravery against the Bulgarians.[67] John Skylitzes focuses on the name 'Moroleon' and explains that he earned this moniker on account of his rash impetuosity in battle.[68] Similarly, while Anna Komnene extols Alexios I Komnenos' (1081-1188) heroic achievements on the field she disapproves his engagement in a single combat with a Cuman warrior. She remarks that on that occasion Alexios I showed himself more of a soldier than of a general.[69] Therefore, reckless heroism could be met with admiration and disapproval in equal measure.

Furthermore, Kantakouzenos appears to approve the use of cunningness and deception to achieve victories. Explaining why in1334 Andronikos III and the *megas domestikos* accepted the offer of Sphranzes Palaiologos to murder the general Syrgiannes, who had orchestrated a rebellion in the western parts of the empire and allied himself with the Serbians, Kantakouzenos writes that nobody would blame them if they were able to overcome the enemy and bring the war to an end before it starts, without taking the risks entailed in the use of arms and in the recruitment of troops.[70] In his account of the plots and deliberations that took place immediately after the death of Andronikos III, Kantakouzenos claims that Alexios Apokaukos had told Andronikos Asan that the most prudent of the emperors do not always use bravery to encounter their enemies in pitched battle; they also use deception, cunning methods and stratagems, in particular when they are engaged with fearful and very strong

66 *The Taktika of Leo VI*, ed. Dennis, 14.3; *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, ed. Dennis, 2.15.

67 *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. Bekker, pp. 404-05.

68 John Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. Thurn, p. 218, Wortley, *John Skylitzes*, p. 211; Holmes, *Basil II and the Governance of Empire*, p. 151.

69 Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, eds. Reinsch/Kambylis, 10.4.7.

70 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 452.

enemies; none reproaches them for cheating. On the contrary, everyone admires those methods that achieve more than bodily strength could.[71]

Beyond the aforementioned theoretical statements, Kantakouzenos cites specific examples. He relates that in 1329, together with Andronikos III launched a surprise attack against Turkish raiders somewhere between Bera and Traianoupolis.[72] In the early stages of the civil war of 1341-1347 Kantakouzenos intended to march on Andrianople. However, in an attempt to conceal his plans he pretended that he was advancing against other Thracian cities.[73] Gregoras claims that in April 1343 Kantakouzenos captured Beroia by deceiving the Serbians. The people of Beroia had sent an embassy to Serbia ostensibly to negotiate its surrender, while at the same moment they were negotiating with Kantakouzenos, who was pretending that he was hunting together with his associates, when they entered the city.[74]

These statements which indicate a cautious approach to war are in agreement with traditional Byzantine percepts which emphasize the employment of trickery and stratagem, surprise attack and avoidance of pitched battles.[75] The promotion of deceit and delay tactics by Byzantine authors and military leaders does not necessarily contradict the virtues of courage and valor. Instead, they indicate the exceptionally good judgment of the heroes and their ability to devise the proper course of action. These were among the virtues esteemed by Byzantine historians and authors since the middle Byzantine period.[76] Consequently, while in his accounts of battle Kantakouzenos portrays himself as a heroic soldier in order to promote his military prowess, by claiming that he employed stratagems and cunningness to achieve his aims he promotes himself as a resourceful military leader.

As has already been mentioned, description of battle extolling military prowess become scarce in Kanakouzenos' account of the period following the death of Andronikos III in 1341. His description of the civil war of 1341-47 is dominated by movements of armies and raids aiming at damaging the economic basis and morale of the enemy. Kantakouzenos' description of the movements of his army during the civil war shed light on the difficulties he faced in leading his troops and his limitations as a military leader.

71 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 116.

72 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 390.

73 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 187.

74 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, p. 655.

75 *The Taktika of Leo VI*, ed. Dennis, 12.4; *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, ed. Dennis, 2.157.1, 8.86; Kaegi, *Byzantine military strategy*; Haldon, *Warfare State and Society*, pp. 37-38.

76 Markopoulos, "Η ιστοριογραφία των δυνατών", pp. 397-405.

Kantakouzenos ascribes his inability to stop his enemies from taking control of most of the Thracian cities in the early stages of the civil war in 1341 to bad weather. He writes that although he had under his command a good army, he was unable to campaign because his troops needed shelter from the snow and the rain.[77] Kantakouzenos omits to mention that the bad weather would have affected his enemies as well. When he decided to march from Didymoteichon to Adrianople, Kantakouzenos pretended that he was marching against other Thracian cities in order to distract his enemies. He set up camp on the western bank of Maritza River where his army spent the night. However, the following morning the river was frozen. The ice was too thin for the horses to ride on and too thick to use light boats to cross the river. Kantakouzenos writes that he spent twelve days waiting and trying to find a way to cross the river.[78] This incident illustrates the difficulties caused by out of season campaigns and one wonders why it took Kantakouzenos twelve days to decide his next moves. Kantakouzenos encountered the same problem when he set up camp in Galikos River near Thessalonica. His advance westwards was delayed because many of his soldiers refused to continue marching towards Epiros and deserted him. However, when Kantakouzenos decided to continue his march without them, he was unable to cross the river, since it was flooded due to heavy rain. Kantakouzenos appears to have learnt from his previous mistake in Mariza River and indicates that he received much of his training as a general through experience. He writes that, recalling what had happened in Maritza River and because the army was running out of supplies, Kantakouzenos decided to withdraw to Gynaikokastron.[79] Similarly, in his account of his attempt to march from Serbia to Didymoteichon in 1343, Kantakouzenos writes that he was unable to cross Axios River because it was flooded.[80]

Moreover, the failure to capture Servia from the Serbians in 1350 is attributed to bad weather. After providing a rather detailed description of Servia, probably to demonstrate how difficult it was to capture it, Kantakouzenos comments that it was impossible for his army to storm every side of the walls. Nevertheless, he decided to attack. He claims that he ordered the best of his archers to shoot on the defenders while other soldiers were mining the walls using their shields as a protection. Eventually, Kantakouzenos was forced to

77 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 185.

78 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, II, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, pp. 188-89.

79 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, pp. 237-43; Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, II, pp. 634-35.

80 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, II, pp. 358-60; Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, II, p. 659.

abandon the siege due to the heavy rain.[81] In another instance indicating the logistical difficulties faced by Kantakouzenos, he writes that in 1342 he failed to capture Serres after a twelve-day siege because his Serbian allies were decimated by dysentery. Kantakouzenos remarks that the Serbian soldiers ate honey, meat and grapes, they fell ill and over 1,500 of them died. Unsurprisingly, Kantakouzenos points out that he was not responsible for the deaths of the Serbian soldiers and claims that no one of his Byzantine followers died.[82]

It has been argued that these accounts of military failures reflect Kantakouzenos' aim to portray himself as a tragic hero and enhance the reliability of his account. He wishes to emphasize that contrary to his wishes and intentions, he was forced to face many perils and fight many enemies.[83] In addition to this, Kantakouzenos strives to convince his audience that he regretted having to fight against his fellow Byzantines. To exonerate himself from the charge that he contributed to the expansion of the Turks by using them as allies and mercenaries in the 1340s, Kantakouzenos contrasts the wars against other Byzantines to the wars against the Turks. Therefore, while he describes in relative detail how he and Andronikos III defeated Turkish raiders by risking their life on the field and killing scores of enemy soldiers, he depicts a less violent picture of the battles against fellow Byzantines. For instance in 1322, when the forces of Andronikos III besieged and captured the city of Apros, which was under the control of an army loyal to Andonikos II, Kantakouzenos remarked that no soldier from either side died in the battle. Andronikos III allegedly said that, 'we should fight against the barbarians until the end. Against those of the same ethnicity with us we should fight as much as is profitable.'[84] Promoting himself as a dedicated warrior in battles against fellow Byzantines would not have served Kantakouzenos' interests. Nevertheless, Kantakouzenos strives to demonstrate that he was not personally responsible for these failures. He attributes them to factors beyond his control, such as the unpredictability of weather, and not to his incompetence as a military leader.

In conclusion, most of Kantakouzenos' descriptions of military operations can read like those of an eyewitness participant. He is able to convey the chaos of the defeat of the Byzantine army at Pelekanos, while the recollection of emotions and sensory aspects, such as the reactions of the Byzantines when they suddenly saw the Tatars arriving to reinforce the Bulgarians in Rosokastron

81 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, III, pp. 130-33.

82 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, pp. 295-96; Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopin, pp. 644, 657.

83 Kazhdan, "L histoire de Cantacuzène", pp. 286287, 305.

84 John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV*, eds. Schopin/Niehbur, I, p. 124.

and the account of the surprise attack of Momcilo in Koumoutzena, heightens the personal nature of the account. However, it is inevitable that Kantakouzenos' value as an eyewitness and the importance of his work as a source of military history relies on what he thought important and the purpose to which he put the information he collected. While his narrative of warfare is built on the foundation of personal experience, it is shaped by various factors that were irrelevant to the wish to record an accurate account of events: the need to justify his support to Andronikos III's revolt and present his reign as a period of revival of the military strength of the empire, the desire to criticize Andronikos II and possibly John V, the wish to shift responsibility from himself and Andronikos III for the Byzantine defeats on the battlefield and the inability to thwart the Turkish expansion. Nevertheless, Kantakouzenos' accounts of battle, even if they are distorted, provide a useful insight into the military thought, mentality and experience of a fourteenth-century Byzantine general.

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PART 5

Military Roles within Society

CHAPTER 15

Stradioti, Cappelletti, Compagnie or *Milizie Greche:* 'Greek' Mounted and Foot Mercenary Companies in the Venetian State (Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)

Stathis Birtachas

By the fifteenth century the political presence of Venice in both the Italian Peninsula and the Levant had become incontrovertibly dynamic. Already from the first decade of the century the Republic embarked on its territorial expansion, by conquering a large part of the North Italian hinterland (the surrounding land and parts of Lombardy), which constituted henceforth the Venetian *Terraferma*. As the century progressed, it consolidated its role in the Adriatic, by maintaining or gaining footholds on the Dalmatian and the Albanian coast. In the Hellenic territories and the eastern Mediterranean, after the Fall of Constantinople to Mehmed II, it was confronted directly by the Ottoman onslaught and suffered the loss of some of its possessions. However, these setbacks were offset by the conquest of other territories, mainly in the Ionian Sea and the Peloponnese, as well as by the annexation of the particularly profitable Kingdom of Cyprus. Consequently, here too Venice remained powerful not only at the political level but also in the sector of economic and mercantile activity. In short, at the end of the fifteenth century Venice was one of the mightiest states in the Italian Peninsula, as well as the greatest maritime power in the Mediterranean. Nonetheless, the cost of its expansion and reinforcement was proved to be heavy. First of all, inordinately large sums of money had to be expended on the upkeep, modernization or even the design from scratch of fortification works, which were to secure the defence of an enormous empire on land and sea. Secondly, military corps had to be formed and armed in order to curb the conquering ambitions of much larger states with which it was difficult to compete. The outbreak of hostilities between Venice and the Ottoman Turks, in the eastern Mediterranean in 1463, and the crushing military defeat of Venice by the forces of the League of Cambrai, at Agnadello in 1509, are events indicative of the pressures that the Republic of Saint Mark was to face hereafter.[1]

1 Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400-1508", pp. 20-64; Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 221-27; Birtachas, *Κοινωνία, πολιτισμός και διακυβέρνηση*, pp. 19-22; Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire", pp. 131-36.

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Within the framework of the Republic of St Mark's embroilment in successive martial operations, as well as of its defence strategy in the *Terraferma* and its Maritime State (*Stato da mar*) in the Levant, from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century,[2] the paper examines its recruitment firstly of the so-called *stradiots* (*stradioti*), mercenary light cavalry corps of Greek, Albanian, and Slav origin, as well as of the likewise mounted *cappelletti*, which are the development of the *stradiots* from the seventeenth century; and secondarily of the mercenary groups of 'Greek' infantry named *compagnie* or *milizie greche*.

Mounted Companies: the *stradioti* and *cappelletti*

Recruitment of the first of these mercenary companies, the light cavalry *stradiots* (*stradioti*),[3] began during the second half of the fifteenth century. They introduced into Italy and the West in general a mixture of Byzantine, Slav,

2 For Venetian military organization during those centuries see Concina, *Le trionfanti et invitissime armate venete*; Hale, "From peacetime establishment to fighting machine"; Concina, *La macchina territoriale*; Mallett/Hale, *The Military Organization*; Marchesi, *Fortezze veneziane*; Redolfi, *Venezia e la difesa del Levante*; Hale, "Venezia e la 'rivoluzione militare' europea"; Chambers/Clough/Mallett, *War, Culture, and Society*; Prelli, *L'esercito veneto*; Favaloro, *L'esercito veneziano*; Perini, "Le milizie della Terraferma"; Del Negro, "La milizia"; Perini, *La difesa militare della Terraferma*; Cacciavillani, *La milizia territoriale*; Del Negro, "La politica militare di Venezia"; id., "Il leone in campo"; Concina/Molteni, *"La fabrica della fortezza"*; Pezzolo, "Fonti e problemi"; Panciera, *Il governo delle artiglierie*; Pezzolo, "Stato, guerra e finanza"; Tamburrini, "L'organizzazione militare"; Del Negro, 'Prefazione'; Porto, *Una piazzaforte in età moderna*, pp. 17-25; Birtachas, *Κοινωνία, πολιτισμός και διακυβέρνηση*, pp. 49-66; Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire", pp. 203-13.

3 The types *stradiotti*, *strathioti*, *stratioti* are also encountered in the sources. For these see the following bibliography: Ricotti, *Storia delle compagnie di ventura*, pp. 248-49; *Μνημεία Ελληνικής Ιστορίας*, vols. 1, 4, 5-9; Barbarich, "Gli Stradiotti"; Oman, *A History of the Art of War*, pp. 41, 92, 109-11; Babinger, "Albanische Stradioten"; Vakalopoulos, *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, vol. 3, passim; Ducellier, "Les Albanais à Venise"; id., "Les Albanais dans les colonies Vénitiennes"; Chassiotes, *Οι Έλληνες στις παραμονές της ναυμαχίας της Ναυπάκτου*, pp. 37-48, 76-85, 135-226; Concina, *Le trionfanti et invitissime armate venete*, pp. 70-78; Kolyva, "Θεόδωρος Παλαιολόγος"; Mallett, *Mercenaries and Their Masters*, pp. 119, 152, 198, 232; Zakythinos, *Le despotat grec de Morée*; Mallett/Hale, *The Military Organization*, passim; Kyrris, "Mercenaires Albanais"; Sathas, *Έλληνες στρατιώται εν τη Δύσει*; Tucci, "Venezia e i prigionieri di guerra nel Medioevo", pp. 86-88; Netto, "Per una biografia di Mercurio Bua"; Ploumides, "Νικόλαος († 1528) και Ιωάννης († 1529) Παλαιολόγοι stradioti"; Nicolle, *Fornovo 1495*, passim, esp. 28-29, 33; Petta, *Stradioti soldati albanesi*; Bires, *Αρβανίτες*, 113-203; Patapiou, "Η κάθοδος των Ελληνοαλβανών"; Pilidis, "*Morire per honor di la Signoria*"; Concina, "Strathiotti palicari"; Maltezou, 'Stradioti'; Bugh, "Andrea Gritti"; Pappas, '*Stradioti*'; Birtachas, "La memoria degli *stradioti*".

Albanian, and Ottoman unorthodox tactics and methods of light cavalry warfare. The provenance of these companies is obviously Byzantine and their name is due most probably to corruption of the Greek term *στρατιώτης* (pl. *στρατιώτες*). During the Late Byzantine period the term *στρατιώτης* acquired also the meaning of the horseman-cavalryman to whom the empire had ceded a fief (*πρόνοια*) in return for his military services. Less plausible is the suggested derivation from the Italian word *strada* (road, way, route), according to which *stradiot* meant traveller, wayfarer, errant cavalryman or warrior.[4]

The precise definition of the ethnic identity of the *stradiots* has been the object of meticulous study. The references of Italian historians and other authors of the time do not converge. For instance, Paolo Giovio refers to them as Spartans, Achaeans or Greeks; Philippe de Commynes as exclusively Greeks; Torquato Tasso as errants born in Greece; Pietro Bembo as Greeks and Epirots; Luigi da Porto as Levantines; Marin Sanudo as Greeks, Albanians, Epirots or even Turks; Antonio Maria Graziani as Epirots, and so on.[5] This confusion was bequeathed to later authors and scholars. Today, we have come to the conclusion that they were Greeks and Albanians who mainly originated from the Morea (Peloponnese), whence many of them or their forebears had migrated from more northerly regions and found refuge. In the Morea they offered their services to the Byzantine Despotate of Mystras and to the areas of Argos, Napoli di Romania (Nauplion), Modone, Corone, and Malvasia, which were then under Venetian domination.[6] From studies on the provenance of their names it is deduced that about 80% of the *stradiots* were of Albanian and very

4 *Μνημεία Ελληνικής Ιστορίας*, vol. 4, pp. LIV-LVI; Vakalopoulos, *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, vol. 3, pp. 26-27; Mallett, *Mercenaries and Their Masters*, p. 152; Sathas, *Έλληνες στρατιώται εν τη Δύσει*, p. 180; Bires, *Αρβανίτες*, p. 117 n. 1; Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [pp. 1, 3, 5-6, 8-9].

5 Torquato Tasso, *Rime eroiche*, in *Delle opere di Torquato Tasso, con le controversie sopra la Gerusalemme Liberata ...*, vol. 6, Venice 1736, p. 324; Coriolano Cippico, *Delle guerre de' Veneziani nell'Asia dal MCCCCLXX al MCCCCLXXIII libri tre ...*, ed. I. Morelli, Venice 1796, p. 10; Marin Sanudo, *Commentarii*, p. 114; *Ragguagli sulla vita e sulle opere di Marin Sanuto, detto il juniore, veneto patrizio e cronista pregevolissimo de secoli XV, XVI. Intitolati dall'amicizia di uno straniero al nobile Vincenzo Foscarini*, vol. 2, Venice 1837, p. 232; Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, ed. M. Dupont, vol. 2, Paris 1843, p. 456; Luigi da Porto, *Lettere storiche*, pp. 41, 50; Marin Sanudo, *La spedizione di Carlo VIII*, p. 313; Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme Liberata*, ed. G. Getto, Brescia 1960, pp. 72-73; Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, p. 171; *Antonii Mariae Gratiani, De Bello Cyprio*, ed. Ch. Gasparis, Nicosia 1997, pp. 148-49; Bires, *Αρβανίτες*, p. 188.

6 Ducellier, "Les Albanais dans les colonies Vénitiennes"; Zakythinos, *Le despotat grec de Morée*, vol. 2, pp. 31-37, 135-45; Topping, P., "Albanian Settlements"; Panaghiotopoulos, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί της Πελοποννήσου*; Bires, *Αρβανίτες*, pp. 92-101, 113-55; Doumerc, "Un peuple en errance", pp.147-59.

few of Slav origin (*Crovati*). The remainder were Greek and, for the most part, captains (*capitani di stradioti*).[7]

Light cavalry companies of *stradiots* are encountered in the service of a series of European States: Venice, Milan, Genoa, Florence, the Kingdom of Naples and Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, France, England, and Russia.[8] Here we shall deal exclusively with their recruitment by the Venetian State.

The Republic of Saint Mark proceeded to their recruitment mainly in two cases: a) in the framework of its wars with foreign powers in the Italian Peninsula from the late 1470s until the War of Gradisca (1615-17), and b) in the framework of its defensive strategy against the Ottomans, in the garrisons of its overseas colonies on the Dalmatian and Albanian coasts, as well as in the Hellenic territories and the eastern Mediterranean generally, from the time of the First Ottoman-Venetian War (1463-79) until the political demise of Venice (1797).[9] This happened because of the abundance of corps of this kind, their very low remuneration in comparison to Western European mercenaries (Italians, Swiss, Germans, *et alii*),[10] but also their peculiar style of fighting. Another factor differentiating the *stradiots* from the classic mercenaries of the period was the fact that they were in some way refugees from Greece and the Balkans, as in their places of deployment they were accompanied by their families. Apart from their salary, they enjoyed from the Venetian State privileges and honours, that is, grants of land as well as conferred titles – usually of knight (*cavaliere*) of St Mark –, gifts of cloth-of-gold surcoats, and pensions to those who had distinguished themselves, to widows or to other dependent persons.[11] On the basis of research to date, it is not possible to determine accurately the number of *stradiots* who served in the Venetian Army. However, the overall number does not seem to have exceeded 2,000-2,500 men.[12]

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7 Bires, *Αρβανίτες*, pp. 188-203; Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [p. 4].

8 Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [pp. 2, 6-7].

9 *Μνημεία Ελληνικής Ιστορίας*, vol. 8; Vakalopoulos, *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, vol. 3, pp. 79-88; Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400 to 1508", pp. 73-74; Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", p. 447; Bires, *Αρβανίτες*, pp. 156-85; Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [pp. 1-2, 4-5, 8]. They were based mainly on Traù (Trogir), Sebenico (Sibenik), Castelnuovo, Spalato (Split), Zara (Zadar), Bocca di Cattaro (Kotor), Budua (Budva), Dulcigno (Ulcinj), Antivari (Bar), Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante, Cerigo (Kythira), Crete, and Cyprus.

10 Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400 to 1508", p. 47. In general, they were remunerated with 3-4 ducats a month, excluding expenses of feeding their horses. Concina, *Le trionfanti et invitissime armate venete*, pp. 75-76. For salaries of the *stradiots* in the *Stato da mar* see also below.

11 Marin Sanudo, *La spedizione di Carlo VIII*, p. 509; Concina, *Le trionfanti et invitissime armate venete*, pp. 75-76; Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", p. 376; Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [p. 5].

12 Petta, *Stradioti soldati albanesi*, pp. 65-66; Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire", p. 204. Bires

The *stradiots* were organized in companies (*compagnie*), under the orders of *stradiot*-captains (*capitani*). The size of the company was not fixed, but usually ranged between 10 and 60 horsemen.[13] For the more effective management and coordination of these corps, in 1484 Venice created in the *Terraferma* the post of a commissioner of the *stradiots* (*provveditore di stradioti*), which was filled by a Venetian patrician.[14] Correspondingly, in the overseas possessions it created the office of a general commander (*governatore della stratia*), who came from the ranks of the *stradiots* themselves.[15]

The *stradiots* owed their reputation principally to their unorthodox Balkan and oriental military tactics, which vied with those of the *akıncı*, the Ottoman light cavalry divisions they sometimes faced on the battlefield. Armed with speed, agility and stamina, and oblivious to danger, the *stradiots* made reconnaissance forays or surprise raids deep inside the areas controlled by enemy forces, taking booty or even launching successive attacks and retreats, aimed at disorientating the foe or even at misleading it by drawing it into their pursuit. Likewise swift, resilient and unrivalled in battle were their nimble horses, which were not protected by armour.[16] The Venetian historian and diarist Marin Sanudo exalts one further asset of the *stradiots*, their loyalty to their employer (the Republic of Saint Mark).[17] Even so, we know for certain that

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estimates the number of *stradiots* who served in the Venetian Army during the Italian Wars at about 4,500, who together with their families must have constituted a population group of at least 15,500 individuals. Bires, *Αρβανίτες*, p. 172.

13 E.g., Archivio di Stato di Venezia (hereafter ASV), Collegio, Notatorio, reg. 99, fols. 188v-189r (olim 23v-24r), 21 April 1644; ASV, Collegio, Lettere comuni, filza 2, fol. 9r, 6 February 1550 (1549 m.v.); Patapiou, "Η κάθοδος των Ελληνοαλβανών", pp. 173, 175, 186, 190, 194; Arvanitakis, *Οι αναφορές των Βενετών προβλεπτών*, pp. 100, 132, 181, 200-01, 249; Pagratis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών βαΐλων*, pp. 187, 204, 246, 335, 364, 389; Tsiknakis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών προνοητών*, pp. 13, 22, 29, 38, 47, 57, 58, 71, 90.

14 Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400 to 1508", pp. 73, 174-75; Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 263, 266; Bugh, "Andrea Gritti", p. 83 and n. 10.

15 The types *strattia*, *strathia* are also encountered in the sources. Patapiou, "Η κάθοδος των Ελληνοαλβανών", pp. 171-78; Arvanitakis, *Οι αναφορές των Βενετών προβλεπτών*, p. 540-41; Pagratis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών βαΐλων*, p. 491; Tsiknakis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών προνοητών*, p. 235.

16 Marin Sanudo, *Commentarii*, p. 114; Taylor, *The Art of War in Italy*, pp. 72-73; Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400 to 1508", p. 73. The cost of the *stradiots*' choicest horses, Turkish thoroughbred, ranged from 100 to 200 ducats. Gradually, however, their quality diminished, due to the scarcity of horses in the eastern Mediterranean (the Ottomans prohibited their export) and the dissemination of mules to the islands. Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 449-50; Petta, *Stradioti soldati albanesi*, pp. 51, 61.

17 Marin Sanudo, *La spedizione di Carlo VIII*, p. 509.

stradiots frequently sought new employers, even rivals of the *Serenissima*, such as France or the Spanish Kingdom of Naples, mainly for economic reasons but also for social and political ones.[18] Sanudo also gives us a brief description of certain peculiar habits of the *stradiots*, insisting on their ferocity:

> They commit robberies … they are unrivalled in raids, plunders of places…; and they do not take captives, but cut off the head, and are used to being rewarded by the captain with one ducat for each. They are frugal in diet and thrifty in needs, it is enough for their horses to be healthy.[19]

It is true that the habits and the unruly nature of the *stradiots* sometimes created problems in the Venetian Army. This happened, for example, in the battle of Fornovo (1495), in which the Venetians lost their advantage over Charles VIII of France, due among other reasons to some *stradiots* neglecting the struggle and looting the French supply convoys, from which they were said to have acquired booty to the tune of 180,000 gold ducats.[20] So, there was no shortage of reasons why some Venetian officials castigated them as "Anti-Christian, perfidious, born thieves and potential traitors: more pernicious to our own side than to the enemy."[21] Nevertheless, in later wars their tactics impressed both their Venetian employers and their opponents, who could only confront them by employing arquebuses and artillery. Consequently, the Vicentine writer and historian Luigi da Porto sings the *stradiots'* praises as follows: "they attack suddenly like devils …; and swimming rivers wide and deep, and using routes almost unknown to the peasants themselves, they progress with unbelievable stealth into the depths of the enemy."[22]

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18 Chassiotes, *Οι Έλληνες στις παραμονές της ναυμαχίας της Ναυπάκτου*, pp. 37-48, 76-85; id., *Σχέσεις Ελλήνων και Ισπανών*; id., "Η Πελοπόννησος"; Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [pp. 6-7].

19 Marin Sanudo, *La spedizione di Carlo VIII*, p. 313. For the practice of one-ducat payment see also Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400 to 1508", p. 73.

20 Pietro Bembo, *Della Istoria Viniziana di M. Pietro Bembo, cardinale, da lui volgarizzata, libri dodici secondo l'originale pubblicati*, vol. 1, in id., *Opere di cardinale Pietro Bembo*, vol. 3, Milan 1809, pp. 133, 138, 142; Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, pp. 182-83; Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400 to 1508", p. 73; Sathas, *Έλληνες στρατιώται εν τη Δύσει*, pp. 171-78; Nicolle, *Fornovo 1495*, passim, esp. pp. 64, 73-75.

21 Bugh, "Andrea Gritti", p. 82, n. 4. The outbreaks of unruliness were attributed also to the fact that there was a not inconsiderable number of pardoned murderers in their ranks, as well as to the rivalry between Greeks and Albanians. Ibid.; Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", p. 376. For the negative perception of the *stradiots* by part of their contemporary Italian populations and chroniclers see Pezzolo, "Istituzioni militari", pp. 58-60.

22 Luigi da Porto, *Lettere storiche*, p. 50.

With regard to their outward appearance, da Porto once again informs us that they are "truly strange in aspect, and wear peculiar clothes and are armed with curious weapons; … their shoes are made of rope, and their tunic reaches to the heels."[23] And they did indeed look odd in the Italians' eyes, since – apart from their frugality, their harsh character, their obduracy and their brusque manner – their attire was a hotchpotch of oriental, Byzantine, and western military garb. According to Sanudo, the *stradiots* wear only "those cotton tunics that are sewn in a particular way", "very few wear cuirasses", a cap or a helmet was worn on the head, while their weaponry too was light: "they carry shield, sabre, and lance with a pennant at the tip, and an iron mace."[24] It is known that apart from these weapons they carried an ear dagger and sometimes a bow.[25] A vivid image of the *stradiot's* figure can be formed from engravings and representations, both contemporary and of later periods, as well as from the Byzantine portable icon of the *Deesis* (1546), work most probably of the Cretan painter Markos Strelitzas-Bathas. This icon is in the Greek Orthodox Church of *San Giorgio dei Greci*, which was built in Venice in the sixteenth century, following moves by the *stradiots*, who also contributed decisively to the establishment of Greek Orthodox communities in Northern Dalmatia.[26] According to the inscription, the icon was commissioned by the brothers Ioannes and Georgios Manessis, both *stradiots*, who are depicted in small scale in the lower part. Here, beside a more western style of equipment, they are wearing a coat with long hanging sleeves, directly derived by the Persian ones in use at Byzantium from centuries.[27]

Let us turn now to the role of the *stradiots* in the defensive planning of the Venetian *Stato da mar*, as well as to their social status within this space. At first, the Venetians recruited *stradiots* from the Peloponnese and sent them to various overseas possessions, either to reinforce the defence of the islands or to boost the demography of newly-annexed regions, as was the case in Zante, Cephalonia and Cerigo (1485, 1501-02).[28] In those cases the incomers were granted public lands and as extra incentive were exempted from taxes or even

23 Ibid, p. 41.

24 Marin Sanudo, *Commentarii*, pp. 114-15.

25 Mallett, "Part I: *c.*1400 to 1508", p. 73; Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [p. 3] and nn. 12-13.

26 Kašić, D., "Die Griechisch-Serbischen Kirchensymbiose"; Pilidis, "*Morire per honor di la Signoria*", pp. 32-36, 38-41; Bugh, "Andrea Gritti", p. 85-86; Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [p. 7, 8] and nn. 46, 50.

27 Chatzidakis, M., *Icônes de Saint-Georges*, n. 8, illustrations 6 and 8; Maltezou, 'Stradioti', p. 57.

28 E.g., Komis, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί της Μάνης*, pp. 66-69; Tsiknakis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών προνοητών*, p. xx.

from levies of compulsory labour (*angarie personali*). These men constituted the category of so-called *stradioti decimali*. As we shall see in due course, over time they devolved into farmers-soldiers, who usually lived in impecunious circumstances, unable to upkeep their horses properly and inadequately armed, which meant that they were not battle-worthy.[29]

Nonetheless, a category of mercenary *stradiots* existed, the so-called *provisionati* (or *stipendiati*), who could be moved from one territory to another. As far as their salaries are concerned, great fluctuations are observed depending on periods and regions: indicatively, in 1578 the annual salary of an ordinary *stradiot* in Corfu was 43 ducats, but by 1613 it had reached 96 ducats.[30] Correspondingly, the annual salary of the captain in Cyprus in 1560 was 80-100 ducats. Great fluctuations are observed similarly in the salaries of the *governatori della stratia*: in Cyprus, for example, in the period 1515-25 these were 120 ducats a year, whereas in 1558 they had risen to 210 ducats. Last, in addition to being awarded honorary titles, *stradiots* were appointed as salaried functionaries of the bureaucracy and to junior administrative offices of the Venetian possessions, which were not intended for the nobles.[31]

The Venetians' decision to man their military forces with companies of mounted *stradiots* is linked with the implementation of a specific defensive tactic of theirs, particularly in the most exposed or remote islands. Defence of these possessions went hand in hand with anxiety about the possible landing of hostile Ottoman forces, or even about piratical raids at some point, which could not, of course, be foreseen with absolute certainty. In these circumstances, the Venetians were obliged to back up their defence in two sectors. On the one hand they had to have available flexible army divisions like the light cavalry corps, which were able to patrol easily and to move rapidly from the fortresses and the fortified towns, where they were billeted, towards the area vulnerable either to enemy landings, whether on a serious scale or piratical

29 E.g., Arvanitakis, *Οι αναφορές των Βενετών προβλεπτών*, pp. 173-74; Tsiknakis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών προνοητών*, pp. 29-30, 156. In Zante, between 1546 and 1601 these exemptions corresponded to about 5-8 ducats per annum, but according to the calculations of the island's *provveditore* (governor) Agostino Sagredo, in 1625 this sum was about 20 ducats. Arvanitakis, *Οι αναφορές των Βενετών προβλεπτών*, pp. 65-66, 86, 146-47, 229.

30 Pagratis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών βαΐλων*, p. 187; Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", p. 451. Differentiations in the *stradiots'* salaries are encountered even in the same possession during the same period. For instance, in Cephalonia in 1560 their annual remuneration ranged between 16 and 40 ducats. Tsiknakis, *Οι εκθέσεις των Βενετών προνοητών*, p. 22.

31 Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 448-49; Patapiou, "Η κάθοδος των Ελληνοαλβανών", pp. 166-67 and n. 23, 168-70 and n. 36, 171 and n. 42, 172, 175 and n. 57, 181-83, 202, 208. Birtachas, *Κοινωνία, πολιτισμός και διακυβέρνηση*, pp. 69, 213, 249, 254-56, 310-11.

raids. In this task they could be assisted by organized local companies of armed peasants – a kind of civil guard or militia (*cernide*, *ordinanze*) –, which would come from the areas closest to the place where there was need. On the other hand, the Venetians were obliged to take care of the fortifications of the fortresses and the cities, especially the coastal ones, and of strengthening the essential garrisons of soldiers. The last had, of necessity, a more static role and for this reason were made up of infantrymen. Even so, in some fortresses of strategic importance, or generally at points where there was increased possibility of an enemy disembarkation, alongside the foot-soldiers a number of *stradiots* was frequently deployed too.[32]

Apart from the aforesaid defensive activities, the *stradiots* also carried out duties of a policing nature (protecting trade, cracking down on smuggling, etc.) or were used as instruments of repression against uprisings and phenomena of disobedience to Venetian sovereignty by the native populations. This happened, for instance, when part of the population of the Cypriot village of Lefkara declared submission to the Ottomans, immediately after Ottoman troops landed on the island in 1570. A corps of one hundred *stradiots*, led by Demetrios Laskaris Megadoukas, arrived at the scene, slew the four hundred or so male inhabitants and put the village to the torch.[33] In the preceding decade, a former *stradiot* in the service of Emperor Charles V, Jacob Diassorinos, surnamed '*didaskalos*' (schoolmaster), is attested as organizer of a conspiracy in Cyprus against Venetian dominance, in which *stradiots* serving on the island are said to have participated.[34]

Stradiots were installed, among other islands, in Crete and Cyprus to replace the outmoded feudal cavalry. Nevertheless, as time passed phenomena of decline started to appear among them too. This happened because both the veteran and the active *stradiots* began to settle permanently on the Venetian overseas colonies and from generation to generation to be incorporated into the local social life. In fact, many of them were now busy with their families and with agricultural tasks in the estates granted them by the state, while the younger ones of them married local women. As a consequence, these *stradiots* gradually evolved into free peasants and lost their earlier military virtues. It

32 Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 350-66, 456-59; Psaras, *Ο θεσμός της πολιτοφυλακής*; Pezzolo, "Stato, guerra e finanza", pp. 93-94; Birtachas, *Κοινωνία, πολιτισμός και διακυβέρνηση*, pp. 52-54.

33 Patapiou, "Η κάθοδος των Ελληνοαλβανών", p. 172 and n. 45; Birtachas, *Κοινωνία, πολιτισμός και διακυβέρνηση*, pp. 152, 186-87; Patapiou, "Ο σφαγιασμός των Λευκαριτών".

34 For this conspiracy see Birtachas, *Κοινωνία, πολιτισμός και διακυβέρνηση*, pp. 115-27, with bibliography. See also the later study by Apostolopoulos, "Τα τελευταία χρόνια της Βενετοκρατίας".

should be added too that the veterans who retired from service were succeeded by their children, not yet of age, or even by other peasants who had nothing to do with the profession of *stradiot*. The Venetian authorities frequently stressed their inadequacy and the need to cleanse the companies of unsuitable men and those unfit for battle. It is noted that these phenomena of decadence were due also and were continually exacerbated by the successive losses of Venetian possessions in the Peloponnese, during the sixteenth century. Thus was lost the ease of recruiting these cavalrymen from their initial places of origin, where they had once distinguished themselves in the struggle against the Ottomans.[35]

However, the *stradiots*, whether in the problematical form of farmers-soldiers or involved exclusively with their military duties, living on their salary and easily dispatched from one territory to another, continued to serve in the garrisons of the Ionian Islands until Venetian rule was dissolved by the French. Even so, in the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth century, Venice went ahead there too with reorganizing the companies of *stradiots*, limiting their number and their privileges, because of their now outmoded character, as well as the disciplinary problems they presented.[36] On the other hand, already from the seventeenth century changes are observed in the aspect, the makeup, and the equipment of the companies of *stradiots* serving in Venetian garrisons of the *Terraferma* and Dalmatia. These companies were now called *cappelletti* – also known as *cappelletti a cavalo* –, after their distinctive pointed headdress.[37] Furthermore, either the number of Greeks decreased or the companies became exclusively Albanian, Croatian or acquired diverse ethnic identity. Nonetheless, the captains were frequently Greeks, who proceeded to shape and organize them, according to the relevant orders of the Venetian authorities. The number of members of each ordinary company rarely exceeded 30-40, due to the frequent cases of insubordination, while the extraordinary compa-

35 E.g., Arvanitakis, *Οι αναφορές των Βενετών προβλεπτών*, pp. 81, 86, 99-100, 114-15, 132-33, 173-74, 190-91, 201-02, 210-11, 249, 272-73, 277, 288-89, 316, 349, 358, 388; Birtachas, *Κοινωνία, πολιτισμός και διακυβέρνηση*, pp. 51-52.

36 Pappas, '*Stradioti*', [p. 8] and n. 49. Already from the early seventeenth century a former *stradiot*-captain abandoned the old tactics of his fellows and advocated new types of organization of the light cavalry corps: Giorgio Basta, *Il governo della cavalleria leggera. Trattato originale del conte Giorgio Basta, utile a soldati, giovevole à guerrieri, & fruttuoso à capitani, & curioso à tutti*, Venice 1612.

37 For the parallel existence of companies of *stradiots* and of *cappelletti* in these regions, at least until the middle years of the seventeenth century, see, e.g., ASV, Collegio, Notatorio, reg. 99, fols. 188v-189r (olim 23v-24r), 21 April 1644.

nies were larger and counted 50-60 men.[38] The weaponry of the *cappelletti* was modernized in comparison with that of their predecessors, by adding firearms, such as pistols and arquebuses. They were armed also with a heavy curved sword, the so-called *schiavona*, which became their hallmark. *Cappelletti* were protected by leather jackets and not by heavy cuirasses. The salary of the ordinary soldier varied from 4 to 8 ducats a month, of the ensign and the lieutenant 15, and of the captain 25. The *cappelletti* companies constituted defensive reserves, which in peacetime carried out duties of border guards, of guards of honour accompanying missions and senior government officials, or even of courier on central road arteries for rapid transport of Dogal epistles and emergency orders of the central state services. They also carried out policing duties corresponding to those of the *stradiots* of the overseas possessions (pursuing deserters, robbers, exiles, murderers, and all manner of felons, security guards of monetary dispatches, eradicating smuggling, etc.). In addition, like the *stradiots*, the *cappelletti* took part in the suppression of seditions and insurrections, as, for example, in the case of the peasants' revolt at Arzignano, against the repression of the bourgeois landowners in July 1655. The *cappelletti's* policing role provoked ill-feeling in the rest of the army and in the indigenous population. But the Venetian administration was most appreciative of their effectiveness. In these circumstances, at least in the *Terraferma*, the once famed light cavalry of the Balkan fighters for Venice lost its martial role and took on the character of a civil service.[39]

Foot Companies: the *Compagnie* or *Milizie Greche*

In a different timeframe from that in which the recruitment of *stradiots* commenced, the Republic of Venice proceeded to the recruitment of another category of 'Greek' mercenary companies. In the early seventeenth century the

38 E.g., ASV, Collegio, Notatorio, reg. 99, fol. 103r (olim 82r), 5 September 1643; ASV, Collegio, Relazioni finali di ambasciatori e pubblici rappresentanti, b. 56, report of the *provveditore della cavalleria croata e albanese in Terraferma* Alvise Donado, 10 October 1623, insert "Nel particolare del posto di Fara", 18 October 1623, unnumbered fols. [1r]; Madunić, *Defensiones Dalmatiae*, p. 153.

39 Ricotti, *Storia delle compagnie di ventura*, p. 248; Barbarich, *La Campagna del 1796*, chapters VIII, IX; Concina, *Le trionfanti et invitissime armate venete*, p. 79; Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 220, 377, 450-51; Prelli, *L'esercito veneto nel primo '600*, pp. 52-59; Perini, "Le milizie della Terraferma", p. 204; Petta, *Stradioti soldati albanesi*, pp. 47-48, 71, 132, 134; Corre, "Έλληνες στρατιώτες στο Bergamo", pp. 295-97; Madunić, *Defensiones Dalmatiae*, pp. 152-53.

Serenissima entered the orbit of political and economic crisis, facing diverse difficulties both in the Levant and in the Italian Peninsula. Specifically, its clash with the Ottomans in the eastern Mediterranean during the previous century had marked the curtailing of its sovereignty in Crete, Tenos, and Mykonos, as well as in the Ionian Islands, and consequently the shrinking of its mercantile and maritime network. In Italy, correspondingly, Spanish-Habsburg and papal policy, as well as military pressure, created asphyxiating conditions to the Venetian State with obvious effects on domestic political life, the economy, and its international relations. Indeed, the crisis of the period of the Interdict (1605-07) and, after this, the mass military mobilization of the Spanish forces in Lombardy and the Valtellina Valley forced the Venetian Republic to press ahead with reorganizing its troops in the region and with recruiting foreign foot-soldiers (*fanteria forestiera*), who originated either from transalpine countries (*oltramontani*: Swiss, Germans, Dutch, French) or from the overseas possessions (*oltramarini*: Dalmatians, Albanians, Greeks). These numbered about 9,200 men and were used as extraordinary infantry (*milizia extraordinaria*).[40] To improve their army the Venetians decided to form individual divisions or companies of soldiers of the same ethnicity. Thus, from the time of the War of Gradisca (1615-17) against the Uskoks and Austrians, and after that the Thirty Years' War, until the eighteenth century, they recruited 'Greek' mercenary companies, which presented some of the elements of the identity of the *stradiots*, but differed in respect of their military physiognomy and function. These were corps of lightly-armed infantrymen, who came from Hellenic territories under Venetian domination and from territories under Ottoman rule. They were called *compagnie* or *milizie greche*.[41] Often Albanians, or more rarely Dalmatians, were included amongst the mercenary groups. Essential prerequisite, however, was the commonality of religious doctrine, given that these groups were accompanied in the places of their deployment by an Orthodox priest, who was responsible for their spiritual guidance.[42]

Corfu was the basic recruitment centre for these infantrymen. From there they were taken to Venice, to the island of Lido, where they underwent medical examinations and one month of basic training. This was followed by their dis-

40 Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 244, 327-28.

41 The types *milicia greca*, *milicie* or *militie greci*, *milicie de greci*, *milicie greze* or even also *milizia di rito greco* are encountered too. E.g., ASV, Senato, Dispacci dei rettori, Bergamo e Bergamasco, filza 18, passim; Ploumides, "Επτανήσιοι μισθοφόροι"; Birtachas, "Η δικαιοδοσία της Ιεράς Εξέτασης", p. 431 n. 74; Pilidis, "*Morire per honor di la Signoria*", p. 37 and n. 33.

42 Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", p. 454; Ploumidis, "Ο αρχιεπίσκοπος Φιλαδελφείας", p. 95; Corre, "Έλληνες στρατιώτες στο Bergamo", pp. 297-336.

tribution in companies, which were then dispatched to their places of deployment. During the period of military activity and tensions, in the first half of the seventeenth century, they lived in large encampments in the Lombard countryside. In periods of peace they were charged with guarding fortified locations and with patrolling the frontier region and difficult areas, such as lakes, rivers, roadways, etc. The battle-worthiness of the companies was ensured through exercises carried out every 15 days in the places of deployment. The foot-soldiers' remuneration was disproportionately low for the demands of their work. In the late sixteenth century their annual salary was paid in 10 instalments of 3 ducats every 36 days, in wartime (the tenth instalment was paid on the 40th day), and every 45 days in peacetime. In the eighteenth century the salary of the ordinary foot-soldier reached 5 ducats a month, of the corporal 6, the sergeant 8, the ensign 10, the lieutenant 14, the captain 25, and the major 30. Those who secured a truly high standard of living and social status were the commanders of the infantry (*governatori della fanteria*), members of the landed families on stand-by contracts (from 700 to 4,000 ducats a year) or incumbents of the most nodal regions, those of Bergamo, Brescia, and Verona.[43]

Recruitment of the *compagnie greche* continued until the *Serenissima*'s fall. In accordance with the military reform of Marshal Johann Matthias von der Schulenburg (1729), each regiment of *oltramarini* infantrymen included eight companies of 54 soldiers. In the eightteenth century Venice had 11 such regiments, posted in Dalmatia, the Ionian Islands and various points of the Venetian hinterland. In general, these mercenary companies were no different from the rest of the companies (of Italians or *oltramontani*) of lightly-armed infantrymen of the Venetian Army, except, as said above, with regard to their ethnic and mainly their religious identity.[44] A noteworthy incident is linked precisely with this particularity and with the political exploitation of it at a specific conjuncture by the Holy See. During the first phase of the Thirty Years' War (1622-24), both Spain and the Habsburgs on the one hand, and Venice on the other, were striving – each for their own reasons – to gain control, at all cost, of the road axes of Lombardy and therefore the strategically significant

43 Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 394-95; Ploumides, "Επτανήσιοι μισθοφόροι", p. 129; Cacciavillani, *La milizia territoriale*, p. 31. For further information on infantry wages between 1509 and 1617 see Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", pp. 494-501.

44 Barbarich, *La Campagna del 1796*, passim; Ploumides, "Επτανήσιοι μισθοφόροι", pp. 129-30; Corre, "'Ελληνες στρατιώτες στο Bergamo", pp. 292-95; Tamburrini, "L'organizzazione militare", passim.

area of Valtellina in the Swiss Canton of Graubünden or Grisons.[45] Then Rome, ally of Spain, began, through its inquisitor in Bergamo, to harass the 'Greek' mercenaries of Venice and the Orthodox priest who was accompanying them and celebrating religious offices on their behalf. After this, the pressure was stepped up through the issue of a papal bull prohibiting the sojourn on Italian soil of all heretics, and therefore of the Orthodox and the Protestant mercenaries of the *Serenissima*. The ultimate aim of the pope was to create fluidity in the frontier zone and to avert the formation of an anti-Spanish front by France, Venice, and Savoy. The tense situation was defused by France's invasion of Valtellina and the subsequent treaty contracted between France and Spain. During this ostensibly ecclesiastical quarrel, the Orthodox *compagnie greche*, which were in the area of Bergamasco, were praised by the Venetian authorities in their representations to Rome.[46]

Conclusions

To recapitulate, the paper has examined the physiognomy and the role of two different categories of 'Greek' mercenary companies recruited by the Venetian Republic, either in the framework of its wars against foreign powers, or for guarding and defending its possessions in the *Terraferma*, the Adriatic, and the eastern Mediterranean. The first of these groups, the mounted *stradiots*, held precedence, as their impact was undoubted in Europe and is documented through the frequent historiographical references, concerning mainly the period of their heyday, which coincides with that of the Italian Wars (1494-1559). Regardless of any negative criticism, by contemporaries, of their unruly nature and savage practices during these hostilities,[47] the *stradiots* are indeed counted among the pioneers of the tactics and the methods of the light cavalry in the Early Modern Era: they introduced an unconventional style of fighting, barely known to the armies of Italy and the West generally, which was a medley of Byzantine, Slav, Albanian, and Ottoman tactics. They excelled at ambushes, hit-and-run attacks, feigned retreats, and counter-attacks. Independently of

45 Hale, "Part II: 1509-1617", p. 218; Hanlon, *The Twilight of a Military Tradition*, pp. 87-92.

46 Birtachas, "Η δικαιοδοσία της Ιεράς Εξέτασης", pp. 428-31; Corre, "'Ελληνες στρατιώτες στο Bergamo".

47 E.g., Luigi da Porto, *Lettere storiche*, p. 41; Marin Sanudo, *I diarii*, vol 1., ed. F. Stefani, Venice 1879, pp. 268, 959; ibid., vol. 2, ed. G. Berchet, Venice 1879, pp. 272, 418, 885, 1321; ibid., vol. 8, ed. N. Barozzi, Venice 1882, p. 294; *I diarii di Girolamo Priuli, aa. 1499-1512*, ed. R. Cessi, vol. 4, Bologna 1939, p. 247. See also above and nn. 19-21.

their martial activities, their name is linked with the founding in Venice, but also in Northern Dalmatia, of Greek Orthodox churches and communities.

Their action is etched firstly in the memory of the *stradiots* themselves. This is deduced, for example, from the epic poem *Ανδραγαθήματα Μερκούριου Μπούα* (*La gesta di Mercurio Bua*), composed in 1519 by the *stradiot* from Zante Tzane Koroneos. In this he hymned the deeds of his celebrated colleague Mercurio Bua from Napoli di Romania, who had served under the flag of Venice, of France, and of the Holy Roman Empire.[48] The adventures of the *stradiots* are likewise etched in the Venetian collective memory, through their penetration into Venetian dialect comedy (*commedia dialettale*). Since this is a comedy of morals, space was given in it to foreigners who gravitated to Venice for mainly professional reasons. The incomers spoke various languages and brought with them their own way of life. Time and again, we see in a series of sixteenth-century plays the cultivation of a Greek-Venetian idiom, the so-called *greghesco*. Its agents were Greeks of limited education (tradesmen, sailors, *stradiots*, *et alii*), who were living in Venice, speaking a mixed colloquial language with lots of mistakes, which passed into the comedies.[49] Thus is explained the presence on the stage of the figure of the *stradiot*, this soldier of fortune who represented a special type in the social articulation of the Venetian State. The most representative examples of this genre are the satirical and pseudo-epic poems by the poet, playwright and actor Antonio da Molino, also known as Burchiella. Their main character is the *stradiot* Manoli Blessi from Napoli di Romania, whose facts and feats are narrated.[50]

48 For the publications of the work see Tzane Koroneos, *Μπούα ανδραγαθήματα*, in C.N. Sathas (ed.), *Ελληνικά ανέκδοτα περισυνταχθέντα και εκδιδόμενα κατ' έγκρισιν της Βουλής εθνική δαπάνη*, vol. 1, Athens 1867 (repr. 1982), pp. 1-153; Tzane Koroneos, *Le gesta di Mercurio Bua*, ed. R. Angiolillo, Alessandria, Piedmont 2013.

49 Sala, "La lingua degli Stradiotti"; Coumarianou, "Το 'Ενετογραικικό ιδίωμα' "; Cortelazzo, *L'influsso linguistico greco a Venezia*; id., "Nuovi contributi alla conoscenza del grechesco"; Coutelle, *Le Greghesco*; and the review of this book by A.L. Vincent, *Ελληνικά* 25 (1972), 480-85; Coutelle, "Grec, greghesco, lingua franca"; Cortelazzo, "I fatti, e le prodezze di Manoli Blessi"; id., "Introduzione del greghesco nel teatro veneziano"; Vescovo, "La commedia delle lingue"; Birtachas, "La memoria degli *stradioti*", pp. 129-33; Varzelioti, "Δραματουργικά και λογοτεχνικά κείμενα", pp. 160-64.

50 These are the following works by A. da Molino: *I fatti e le prodezze di Manoli Blessi strathioto*, Venice 1561; *Barzeletta de quattro compagni Strathiotti de Albania, zuradi di andar per il mondo alla ventura, capo di loro Manoli Blessi da Napoli di Romania*, Venice 1570; *Manoli Blessi sopra la presa de Margaritin. Con un dialogo piacevole di un Greco, et di un fachino*, Venice 1571; *Manoli Blessi nella rotta dell'armata de sultan Selin, ultimo re de Turchi*, Venice 1571; *Il vero successo della presa di Nicosia in Cipro di Manoli Blessi strathiotto*, Venice 1572; *Sonetti di Manoli Blessi strathiotto*, Venice 1572. For these works, the subse-

By the closing years of the sixteenth century the major military adventures of the *stradiots* had finally ceased, and the process of these cavalrymen's incorporation in and assimilation by the societies of their places of deployment continued, while concurrently they lost their fighting fitness. In the *Stato da mar* in particular, a part of them made up a special social class of soldiers-farmers, which contributed on the one hand to fending off the continuous Ottoman assaults, and on the other to boosting the demography of the Venetian possessions. From the end of the sixteenth century, however, they were replaced in the various European armies by organized and disciplined corps of light cavalry, which borrowed elements from the tradition of the *stradiots*, as well as from that of the Hungarian *hussars* or of the Spanish *jinetes* (*genitours*). Nonetheless, from the seventeenth century a more modernized version of the *stradiots* appeared in the Venetian army, the *cappelletti*, which charts their own course and are renowned for their effectiveness, carrying out also duties of military police in the *Terraferma* and Dalmatia. Last, in the same period recruitment commences of the second category of 'Greek' mercenary companies, the infantry *compagnie* or *milizie greche*, for conducting warfare or guarding strategic points, fortresses, and borders. Of course, for these lightly-armed foot-soldiers we have no documents analogous to those for the *stradiots*, concerning their skills and their valiant deeds on the battlefields. Nevertheless, like the companies of *stradiots* and of *cappelletti*, the *compagnie greche* included in their ranks soldiers of sundry Balkan origins (Albanian or Slav). However, these had a common Orthodox Christian religious identity, a factor that secured homogeneity in the corps and the possibility of unimpeded practice of their own religion in their places of deployment. Both the *compagnie greche* and the now anachronistic *stradiots* continued to be recruited by the *Serenissima* until its political end, in Dalmatia, the Ionian Islands, and various points of the Venetian hinterland. Even though, as has been mentioned already, the members of the *compagnie greche* did not have virtues on a par with their *stradiots* forebears, in the difficult years of Venice's dispute with the Spanish, the Habsburgs, and the pope (first half of the seventeenth century), their employers did not hesitate to characterize them as "the best grass that can enter this

quent editions of them, and their author see mainly Crimi, 'Molino', with bibliography. Famous Late Renaissance composers, most of them associated with the ducal chapel of San Marco, set some of Antonio da Molino's texts to music. See Antonio da Molino, *Di Manoli Blessi il primo libro delle greghesche con la musica di sopra, composta da diversi autori, a quatro, a cinque, a sei, a sette e a otto voci*, Venice 1564 (modern ed. S. Cisilino, Padua 1974); and the review of the modern edition by A. Seay, *Music Library Association* 32/4 (June 1976), 868-70; Einstein, "The Greghesca and the Giustiniana"; Schiltz, "'Mi ho scritto e sembre scrivo greghe rime galande' ".

salad."[51] This judgement of the Venetian authorities remains to be verified by detailed archival research, which both for the mounted *stradiots* and the *cappelletti*, and for the foot-soldiers of the *compagnie greche* still has a long way to go.[52] What we can argue confidently for the present is that all the companies of mercenaries we have examined present ethnic diversity. Consequently, only within inverted commas and euphemistically can they be dubbed 'Greek'. Whatever the case, we are speaking about a period before the awakening of nationalism, during which the Greek, Albanian and Slav provenances of the recruits was long-standing. In the final analysis, the term Balkan, would seem to be the best description to apply to all of them.[53]

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51 ASV, Senato, Dispacci degli ambasciatori e residenti, Roma, filza 86, unnumbered fols., 14 May 1622.

52 The doctoral candidate at the University of Corfu, Caterina Corre, is preparing a thesis entitled *The social group of the stradioti: Martial and social function* (*15th-16th centuries*).

53 Pappas, '*Stradioti*'; Katsiardi-Hering, "Από τις εξεγέρσεις στις επαναστάσεις", pp. 590-91.

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CHAPTER 16

A Secret War: Espionage in Venetian Corfu during the Construction of the San Marco Fortress

Chrysovalantis Papadamou

Introduction

The secret war of intelligence gathering, spying and counter-intelligence constitutes a topic that intrigues modern-day readers and researchers alike. Of particular interest seem to be cases that took place between the Christian and Muslim worlds since the Middle Ages showcasing the interest that each of these powers took vis-à-vis on the military actions of their opponents in the area.[1]

In the sixteenth century, the competitiveness of the three main powers in the Mediterranean, the Spanish, the Venetian and the Ottoman Empires, created a climate of suspicion and enmity. The conflict between Spain and Venice regarding the rapprochement with the Sublime Porte led, on a number of occasions, to tension and the undermining of the relations between the two Christian Powers. Conversely, in order to ensure its territorial rights and carry out its imperialistic plans, the Ottoman Empire had to come to bilateral agreements with the above-mentioned powers reflecting their interests at given points in time. An example of the existing climate at the time would be the Venetian–Ottoman treaty that was signed two years after the Holy League victory over the Ottoman fleet at the Battle of Lepanto (1571). Venice, on 7 March 1573, did not hesitate to bypass its allies and form a treaty with the Ottomans in order to secure its interests that were hit after the fall of Cyprus (1571).

To be more specific, the diplomatic achievements of each power fell squarely on the mediation role of the ambassadors stationed in areas under foreign rule, who would become the eyes and ears of their superiors. Protecting at the same time their state's subjects and safeguarding their government's interests, they would also be engaged in espionage. Each power would unleash a wave of spies and informants to complement the work of official diplomacy in times of crisis. Fortification works and the mobilisation of a fleet away from its naval

1 Ilardi, *Studies in Italian Renaissance Diplomatic History*; Storrs, *War, Diplomacy and the Rise of Savoy*; Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*; Frigo, *Politics and Diplomacy*; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia*; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean*.

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base are examples of actions that would trigger the deployment of an intelligence-gathering network.[2]

An investigation of archival material stored in the National Archives of Venice reveals numerous cases of intelligence and counter-intelligence that shed light on how the secret services and spying networks of the *Serenissima* operated, the speed of transmitting information, the means of collecting, safeguarding and spreading the news, and the evolution of cryptography and stenography among other things.

This article will examine instances of spying activity that took place in Corfu between 1577 and 1589. Through these, the strategic importance of Corfu will become apparent, as well as the role played by the fortifications constructed between 1576 and 1588 in mobilising the island's spies. The discussion will also shed light on the counter-intelligence information gathering and reaction of the local authorities, as well as the way in which they dealt with suspects. All cases were located at the National Archives of Venice in the following series: *Senato, Dispacci degli Ambasciatori e residenti Costantinopoli· Senato, Parti Secreti· Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete· Quarantia Criminal· Avogaria di Comun· Collegio, Lettere Secreta* etc.[3]

Venice's Role in the Collection and Transmission of Information in the Mediterranean.

For the most important Mediterranean powers of the time (Spain, Venice and the Ottoman Empire), the collection of information was one of the main tools to preserve their interests, formulate their strategy and optimize their military organization. In order to achieve these goals, each power created secret intelligence networks to collect and analyze information, as well as recruiting a host of informers.[4]

2 Queller, *Early Venetian Legislation on Ambassadors*, pp. 11-53; Steensgaard, "Consuls and Nations", pp. 13-53; Barber, *Diplomacy, the World of the Honest Spy*; Simon, "I Rappresentanti Diplomatici Veneziani", pp. 56-69; Fubini, "Diplomacy and Government in the Italian City-States", pp. 25-48; Pedani, "Consoli Veneziani", pp. 175-205; ead., *Venezia Porta d'Oriente*, pp. 77-81; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia*, pp. 197-209; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean.*

3 Tiepolo, "Archivio di Stato di Venezia", pp. 891-900.

4 Rodriguez de Diego, *Instrucción Para el Gobierno del Archivo de Simancas*; Ilardi, *Studies in Italian Renaissance Diplomatic History;* Preto, S*ervizi Segreti di Venezia;* Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy,* pp. 1-40.

The three main intelligence and spy distribution centers in the Adriatic Sea were Ragusa (modern Dubrovnik), Naples and Venice. Ragusa, in particular, was a nodal point at the time for the competing powers: for the Ottomans the city constituted a "window to the West", for the Spanish it was a gateway to the Balkans, while for the Venetians it was a hotspot for information extraction. Other than an important centre where intelligence and agent activity originating from all three great powers of the time was concentrated and disseminated, Ragusa was also the point of entrance and exit of all official envoys who were travelling to and from Constantinople.[5] At the same time, Ragusa also had a postal network, which although not as advanced as the Venetian one, was very useful to those who wished to avoid the Venetian monopoly in transporting mail.[6] Naples was the 'heart' of the Spanish spying network since that was where the general intelligence headquarters for the East were

5 Dujcev, *Avvisi di Ragusa*; Biegman, "Ragusan Spying for the Ottoman Empire", pp. 237-55; id., *The Turco-Ragusan Relationship;* Barisa, *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans;* Vittorio, "Un Gran Nodo Postale tra Oriente e Occidente"; Inalcik/Quataert, *Economic and Social History*, pp. 256-70; Dedijer, "Ragusan Intelligence", pp. 101-14; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia*, pp. 235-42; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean,* pp. 206-11; id., "The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence", pp. 4-6.

6 Dursteler, "Power and Information", pp. 605. The Venetians were in charge of communications between Europe and Constantinople since the fourteenth century, having at their disposal a postal network established originally as the *Compagnia dei corrieri* (see Caizzi, *Dalla Posta dei Rei,* pp. 211-62). Due to the Ottomans' lack of a postal network until the sixteenth century, they would use Venetian couriers for all correspondence with the West, in spite of the underlying dangers. Even Ottoman spies would use the Venetian postal system. The Ottoman authorities would, however, try in every conceivable way available to apply austere checks to the Venetian couriers, the ultimate goal of which was information extraction. Their attention was particularly drawn to letters exchanged between ambassadors and their governments. Consequently, in order to ensure the integrity of their mail and intelligence, the secret services of each power developed various forms of safer communications, such as cryptography and stenography. Using these techniques meant that the reading of these letters would require specific knowledge. A characteristic example would be the technique where the letter would be written using invisible ink extracted from lemon juice. In that case, in order to read the letter one had to know to heat it on fire. See Allen, *Post and Courier Service,* p. 38; Cattani, "Storia delle Comunicazioni Postali Veneziane", pp. 130-38; Coco, C./Manzonetto, F., *Baili Veneziani alla Sublime Porta*, pp. 73-77; Zanche, *Tra Costantinopoli e Venezia*, pp. 21-26; Couto, "Spying in the Ottoman Empire", pp. 277-78; Dursteler, "Power and Information", pp. 601-23; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean,* pp. 410-13. For the different techniques developed by secret services to secure their documents, see Padover, *Secret Diplomacy*, pp. 253-54; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 261-81; Kahn, *The Codebreakers,* pp. 125-30; Couto, "Spying in the Ottoman Empire", pp. 277-88; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean*, pp. 81-88; id., "The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence", pp. 20-27.

located.[7] Notwithstanding, the primary venue for the collection, analysis and diffusion of largely reliable information was Venice, a fact that rendered the Venetian metropolis a centre for the intelligence and counter-intelligence networks.[8] Primarily for the Spanish spying network, the city of Venice was proven equally, if not more, important than Naples itself. In fact, it was in Venice that the Spanish and the Ottomans concentrated their efforts in extracting and cross-checking information, as well as enlisting informants of every nationality and profession. It is worth mentioning that the Spanish developed relationships with people from the Greek community there, for instance with members of the Vareli, Glytzouni, Siguro, Bustronio, Eudaimogianni families among others.[9] The crowning achievement of their efforts was, in certain cases, the association with individuals that belonged to the higher administrative ranks of the Venetian State, such as secretaries of the Council of Ten (*Consiglio di Dieci*).[10]

The Republic of St Mark (*Repubblica di San Marco*), during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, had become one of the largest naval powers of the time with colonies scattered throughout the Mediterranean and with commercial presence in both the Christian and Muslim lands. As a result, Venice could gather information from different parts of the Mediterranean and had, therefore, established itself as one of the most trustworthy intelligence centre for all powers of that era. Ships arrived almost on a daily basis in Venice, carrying all kinds of merchandise, intelligence and people. Consequently, the *Serenissima*'s authorities were constantly on the alert in order to collect, assess, verify and channel the received pieces of information. It was for this reason that in 1402 the Secret Chancellery (*Cancelleria Secreta*) was established in the ducal palace, a body responsible for the collection and assessment of intelligence, which was aptly equated by those in charge of the Council of Ten in the mid-1500s with "the heart of the Venetian state".[11] Alongside the *Cancelleria Secreta*, other competent bodies responsible for the safeguarding of important state secrets included the *Consiglio di Dieci* and the Inquisitors of the State (*Inquisitori di Stato*), both of which took various preventive measures to control leaks, such as the prohibition of contact between Venetian noblemen and

7 Hassiotes, "Venezia e i Domini Veneziani", p. 123; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 117-35; Couto, "Spying in the Ottoman Empire", pp. 303-09.

8 Kissling, "Venezia Come Centro di Informazioni", pp. 99-109; Hassiotes, "Venezia e i Domini Veneziani", pp. 123-36; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 87-135.

9 Hassiotes, "Venezia e i Domini Veneziani", p. 126.

10 Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 51-53.

11 Couto, "Spying in the Ottoman Empire", p. 280; Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice,* pp. 48-49.

representatives of foreign states. Parallel to this, they encouraged the growth of an informant network, to which they provided economic and other privileges.[12]

In the *Repubblica di San Marco* there were three information collection networks: the political, the commercial and the personal.[13] Each of these had its own significance in evaluating any news collected by the relevant bodies. The main network and the most reliable as far as the central government was concerned was the political, which consisted of noble Venetian officials who were active both within Venetian territories and abroad. In principle, the ambassadors would be responsible for providing information to the central administration and also for ensuring the commercial and territorial rights of the *Serenissima.* Consequently, the ambassadors were Venice's eyes and ears and enjoyed diplomatic immunity in any country where they were stationed. Spain adopted the example of the Venetian ambassadors and had their own ambassadors placed in both Ottoman and Venetian territories. In this manner, alongside protecting their national interests, they had ample opportunity to spy on their rivals. Such intentions, however, would not go unnoticed as evidenced by the vivid protestations of the local authorities in Venetian territories against the presence of Spanish ambassadors, whose removal they would often beseech from the capital.[14]

As regards the Venetian intelligence network in the East, the Venetian dignitary in the heart of the Ottoman Empire, the *bailo* in Constantinople, was the primary informant of the *Serenissima*'s secret services and at the same time the main channel of distribution of all relevant intelligence.[15] Thus, representatives of foreign powers often tried to draw information from the *bailo* himself

12 Maranini, *La Costituzione di Venezia,* pp. 473-90; Finlay, *Politics in Renaissance Venice;* Tiepolo, "Archivio di Stato di Venezia", pp. 902-04; Canosa, *Alle Origini delle Polizie Politiche*; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 55-70; Burke, "Early Modern Venice as a Center of Information", pp. 393-94.

13 Iordanou, "What News on the Rialto", pp. 12-16.

14 Queller, *Early Venetian Legislation on Ambassadors*, pp. 44-55*;* Pagratis, "Το Κονσουλάτον των Μυτιληναίων", pp. 22-45; Papakosta, "Οι Εμπορικοί Πρόξενοι στα Ιόνια Νησιά", pp. 577-93; Pedani, "Consoli Veneziani", pp. 175-205; ead., *Venezia Porta d'Oriente*, pp. 77-81.

15 Queller, *The Office of Ambassadors*, pp. 88-93; Maltezou, *Θεσμός Βενετού Βαΐλου,* pp. 21-33; Mantran, "Venise, centre d'informations", pp. 113-14; Coco/Manzonetto, *Baili Veneziani alla Sublime Porta*; Dursteler, "The Bailo in Constantinople", pp. 1-21; Simon, "I Rappresentanti Diplomatici Veneziani", pp. 56-69; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople,* pp. 23-40; Pedani, "Consoli Veneziani", pp. 175-205; Mumc, *Venedik Baylosu'nun Defteri*, pp. 29-31. Archive series for the correspondence of the *bailo*: Archivio di Stato di Venezia [hereafter: ASVe], Senato, Dispacci Ambasciatori Costantinopoli; ASVe, Capi del Consiglio di Dieci, Lettere di Ambasciatori Costantinopoli; ASVe, Bailo a Costantinopoli.

and from his collaborators. This led to corruption of the Venetian *bailo*, as was the case with Girolamo Lippomano, who most probably committed suicide in 1591 following the revelation of his collaboration with the Spanish, with whom he had already developed a close relationship since the time he was an ambassador in Madrid.[16] On their part, the Ottomans were trying to gain information from the *bailo* and also to exercise control by putting him under constant supervision. Particularly in periods of crisis this supervision could be suffocating, as was the case with *bailo* Marc'Antonio Barbaro during the Cypriot War and the naval battle of Lepanto. The *bailo*'s palace was constantly surrounded by guards so that he would be unable to send information to Venice regarding the movements of the Ottoman fleet.[17]

As a sizeable naval power, Venice could not have left its commercial network and multiple Mediterranean colonies unexploited in terms of collecting intelligence. Consequently, the commercial channel for collecting information, the second information network mentioned above, was mainly used by Venetian merchants and citizens. Other than goods, the merchants would also be transferring intelligence, resulting in the Venetian secret services using them as a constant source of information. At the same time, the local authorities would recruit merchants as spies, particularly in periods of crisis where they would use them to transfer information into war zones. For their part, the merchants were taking advantage of the networks they had developed in their spheres of activity and would collect information both from local elites, and from the marketplace and ports. The collecting of information was also beneficial to the merchants themselves, as it kept them abreast of political developments in the areas they were trading in, safeguarding in this way their best interests and avoiding possible dangers.[18]

Finally, the third network, the personal channel, consisted of people from various professional and social backgrounds, who were enlisted in order to carry out missions of greater or lesser importance. The minority among them were salaried spies, while the majority were nothing but opportunistic and expendable informants. This latter category included among others engineers, soldiers, mercenaries, notaries, freedmen or escaped slaves, renegades, ortho-

16 Tormene, "Girolamo Lippomano", vol. 3/6 pp. 375-431, vol. 4/7 pp. 66-125 and 288-333, vol. 4/8 pp. 127-61; Coco/Manzonetto, *Baili Veneziani alla Sublime Porta*, pp. 51-55; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 76-78.

17 Gürkan, "The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence", pp. 18-19.

18 Tucci, "Tra Venezia e Mondo Turco: I mercanti", pp. 38-55; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 470-72; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean*, p. 100; Iordanou, "What News on the Rialto", pp. 13-14.

dox clergymen and monks, catholic missionaries, and prostitutes. The financial rewards offered to anyone who could provide valuable information was a catalysing factor for such activities. Consequently, driven by personal gain any civilian, independent of their social status or occupation, had the potential to participate in this exchange of intelligence under the incentives offered by any one or more state officials.[19]

The Construction of a Significant Venetian Military Base: the New Fortifications of 1576 – 88

Corfu, an integral component in the chain of commercial bases of the *Serenissima*, was considered by the Venetians during the sixteenth century as the key to the perpetuation of their colonial presence in the East. The island's location at the entrance of the Adriatic Sea had vested Corfu with a very important financial and strategic role.[20] Some of the many names given to the island by Venetian dignitaries, such as "the Adriatic key", "the heart of the Venetian State" and the "bastion of the orthodox world", are telling of Corfu's importance for the Venetians.[21] After the loss of some of Venice's Hellenic territories (e.g. Methoni, Koroni, Lepanto), the administration of Venice's Maritime State (*Stato da Mar – Venice's colonies in the Mediterranean and the Levant*) showed concern not only for the financial but also for the political and military organization of both Corfu and the rest of the Ionian Islands. At this point, it should be mentioned that Corfu was under Venetian occupation between 1386 and 1797. Furthermore, possessing part of the opposite continental Venetian coast, also known as the *Continente*, acted as a shield for the Ionian Islands since it included ports and fortresses, like for example Bouthrotò, Sagiada (Bastià), Preveza, Parga and others. Parga in particular was nicknamed "Corfu's eye and ear".[22]

The continuous Ottoman threat, however, necessitated constant defensive planning. Following the two major Turkish attacks against Corfu (in 1537 and 1571), coupled by pressure exerted by recurring diplomatic missions, the imme-

19 Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia,* pp. 342-53, 455-81; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean*, pp. 100-14; Barzaghi, *Donne o Cortigiane*; Iordanou, "What News on the Rialto", pp. 4-5, 14-16.

20 Cessi, *Storia della Repubblica di Venezia*, pp. 371-72; Constantini, "Le Isole Ionie", p. 155.

21 Sanudo, *I Diarii*, v. 5, p. 821 and v. 16, p. 228; Braudel, F., *La Méditerranée,* p. 121; Giotopoulou-Sisilianou, *Πρεσβείες Βενετοκρατούμενης Κέρκυρας*, pp. 144-45.

22 Sarigiannis, "Το Βενετσιάνικο Εμπόριο στον 150-160 αι.", p. 246; Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire", pp. 142-44.

diate need for keeping the locals secure rendered imperative the building of a new fortifications, which began in 1576. The aim was to organize and protect the island better.[23] Consequently, a new wall was constructed in the town of Corfu strengthened with bastions, which surrounded a large part of the city and the new fortress at the outskirts of San Marco's hill. The New Fortress, otherwise known as San Marco's Fortress, was designed to defend against contemporary artillery using novel architectural methods and modern techniques.[24] Ferrante Vitelli, an architect-engineer who was in the service of the duke of Tuscany, supervised the building of the fortifications.[25] In this manner, the Venetians managed to create a strong defensive foothold and at the same time a safer refueling station, which allowed better communication with the remaining commercial ports in the East. The island, apart from being the headquarters for the general governor of the sea and the captain of the Gulf (*provveditore generale da mar e capitano del Golfo*) became the centre for the provisioning of commercial galleys and a base for the transferring of public correspondence.[26]

The aforementioned defensive works, which took place in Corfu between 1576 and 1588, but also in other Ionian Islands roughly over the same time period,[27] did not go unnoticed by the rest of the Mediterranean powers. After all, from the time of the Cypriot War and even before that, competition between Venice and Spain had been growing. In particular, after the battle of Lepanto (1571) and the signing of the Venetian-Turkish peace treaty (1573) the crisis became even more apparent with the now obvious turn of Spanish aspirations to the East. Additionally, during the same time period, both the Sublime Porte and Spain were constantly processing plans either for the conquest of the Ionian Islands, or for the expansion of their influence in them. These secret

23 Giotopoulou-Sisilianou, "Το Πρόβλημα της Ασφάλειας των Κατοίκων, pp. 169-222; ead., "Η Κερκυραϊκή Πρεσβεία του 1572", pp. 38-46; ead., *Πρεσβείες της Βενετοκρατούμενης Κέρκυρας*, pp. 144-54, 223-87.

24 Agoropoulou-Birbile, *Αρχιτεκτονική Πόλεως Κέρκυρας*, pp. 34-104; Concina, "Città e Fortezze", pp. 188-89; id., "St. Mark, the Stronghold, the Town", pp. 32-34; Cosmescu, ***Venetian Renaissance Fortifications*, pp. 143-69.**

25 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, reg. 11, fols., 78v-79r (26 January 1575); Bacchion, *Il Dominio Veneto su Corfù,* p. 94; Mallett/Hale, *The Military Organization*, p. 444; Concina, "Città e Fortezze", p. 188; id., "St. Mark, the Stronghold, the Town", p. 32; Constantini, "Le isole Ionie", p. 155.

26 Mallett/Hale, *The Military Organization*, pp. 444-47; Tsitsas, *Βενετοκρατούμενη Κέρκυρα,* pp. 73-80; Pagratis, *Οι Εκθέσεις των Βενετών Βαΐλων,* pp. 18-19; Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire", pp. 152-53.

27 Concina, "Città e Fortezze", pp. 184-93; Tsiknakis, "Προσπάθειες Ίδρυσης Φρουρίου Άσου στην Κεφαλονιά", pp. 93-106.

intentions and corresponding plans could not be implemented without the deployment of extensive spy and informant networks, which acted concurrently, complementing the work of official diplomacy.

Spying and Conspiratorial Activities in Corfu during the Construction of the New Fortifications

Located in a supremely strategic area – at the entrance of the Adriatic Sea on the one hand and the Levant on the other –, Corfu played an important role in the process of the distribution of people and information. Ships arrived on a daily basis transporting all kinds of people, goods and news. This ceaseless activity kept the local authorities on their toes regarding any matter of state security or suspicious movement, which they dealt with as promptly as possible.

The level of alertness of the local authorities is illustrated by four espionage cases and a possible conspiracy movement, which took place in 1576 and 1588-89 respectively that is at the beginning and end of the period of fortification construction. In spite of their differences in circumstances, these cases present strong similarities: in the manner in which the suspects were brought to the local authorities, the direct reaction of the latter and the summary arrest and examination of the former, and, finally, their punishment.

More specifically, the cases under investigation concern: a) a Dominican monk, Mariano Spattafora and his Turkish companion (Mustafà Turco or Vicenzo Armeni), a janissary (in ven. *giannizzari* / in tur. *yeniçeri*), b) Abdabei (or Abdibei or Dimitri from Zakynthos), accompanied by a young *acemoğlan* (in ven. *azamoglani*) Mustafà (or Michali, the son of Alessio Varsava), c) two soldiers (one Portuguese and one Florentine), and d) a Cypriot captain, Pietro Antonio Brachimi, and his two sons who served as soldiers in the New Fortress of San Marco (*capitano* and *soldati nella Nova Cittadella di San Marco*).[28]

28 ASVe, Quarantia Criminal, b. 94, numero 33 and numero 34; ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, reg. 11, fols., 102r (24 July 1576), 131r (27 May 1577); ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, filza 20, unnumbered fols., (17 May 1577); ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, filza 24, unnumbered fols., (19 December 1588, 3 March 1589, 24 May 1589); ASVe, Collegio, Lettere Secreta, filza 33, unnumbered fols., (9 July 1588, 6 August 1588, 28 January 1588,); ASVe, Senato, Dispacci degli Ambasciatori e residenti Costantinopoli, filza 28, numero 42, fols. 301r-302r (19 December 1588); ASVe, Senato, Secreti, filza 72, unnumbered fol., (7 July 1601); ASVe, Avogaria di Comun, b. 4041, numero 18; Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia*, p. 103-04.

The starting point in all cases was the reporting of the suspects to the local authorities. The Venetian authorities of Corfu were quick to embark on the verification of the charges. What was, however, the main reason that led the informer to the local authorities? Was an economical benefit or a strong sense of civic duty? As we have already mentioned, Venice promoted the reporting of suspicious activities with monetary rewards and other privileges, as evidenced by the decree of the *Consiglio di Dieci* in 1584.

In the first case, that of the Dominican monk Mariano Spattafora, what seems to have alerted the accuser, a sailor from Corfu, were the suspicious movements of the monk in the harbour and in the Gate of Spilia, an area of particular importance as it was the commercial hub of the city, where people traded their merchandise, and where there were also warehouses and the sanitary department, as well as barracks. Further, the Gate of Spilia was a hub for the financial and administrative services of the state.[29] In terms of the informer, his suspicions were raised when the monk attempted to arrange his transport and that of his companion to Ottoman-ruled Lefkada, with a local captain. What actually led the sailor to file the report though was personal gain, since in his testimony he kept mentioning, alongside his devotion to the *Serenissima*, his very difficult financial state in the hope that he would be rewarded with some privileges.[30]

In the second case, things developed differently.[31] The story took place aboard one of the galleons of the Captain of the Gulf, just before the transport of a janissary, Abdabei, and his young attendant (*acemoğlan*) Mustafà to Venice. There, one of the rowers of the ship recognized the janissary and called him Dimitri from Zakynthos. Although the janissary pretended not to know him and claimed a case of mistaken identity, the rower reported the incident to his supervisors adding further details, namely that he and the janissary had escaped together from the galleon of Benetto Zuliano near Igoumenitsa, on the opposite Epirotic coast, five years earlier.

In both cases, the informers, after reporting the suspects to the local authorities, underlined their devotion to the *Repubblica di San Marco* in an attempt to gain privileges. The authorities promptly arrested the suspects after the

29 Agoropoulou-Birbile, *Η Αρχιτεκτονική Κέρκυρας,* pp. 56-57.

30 The case involving the Dominican monk Mariano Spattafora and his Turkish companion Mustafà Turco (or Vicenzo Armeni) took place in Corfu between 8 June and 10 July 1588. See ASVe, Quarantia Criminal, b. 94, numero 33.

31 The case involving Abdabei (or Dimitri from Zakynthos) and the young *acemoğlan* Mustafà (or Michali) took place in Corfu between 14 April and 19 August 1588. See ASVe, Quarantia Criminal, b. 94, numero 34.

accusations were made. The Dominican monk with his Turkish companion was arrested in the area of Saint Nicolas in front of the house of the *provveditore dell' armata* (the Venetian officer how where responsible for overseeing the Venetian fleet in the Adriatic Sea), whereas the janissary and his companion were arrested on board of the Gulf captain's galley. Following these arrests, the Venetians carried out a number of prosecutions of directly or indirectly implicated individuals whose testimonies present particular interest, not only because one can draw information on people and things that concern those cases, but at the same time because the reader is provided with an opportunity to understand the behavioural patterns of the local people and the vibrant environment of the harbour, market and taverns.

A preliminary observation on this topic is that the use of fake identities may have helped the suspects act more freely. The main suspect in the first case presented himself as a Dominican monk, a fact that theoretically ensured his freedom of movement in Christian territories, privileged treatment from the locals and possibly the groundwork on which to create a social, but also a political network. It is worth noting that at this time spies and informers often adopted the guise of monks or pilgrims.[32] Through a study of the archival sources, it becomes clear that a great number of spies used such covers. For example, in 1570, before the Ottoman attack on Corfu, a 'priest' visited the Ottoman judge (*kadi*) in Thessaloniki and asked him if he could be sent to Corfu as an Ottoman agent under the name Mustafà in order to spy on the ongoing fortification works on the island. Also, Franciscan monks were involved in espionage around the Galata area in Constantinople. In addition to their monastic duties, they would help release Christian prisoners and also spy under the orders of the regent of Naples. When their activities, however, were brought to light, they were violently expelled by the Ottomans.[33]

In the case of the Dominican monk, his movements between the harbour, the barracks and the fortress, but not around the archbishop's palace, a temple, a monastery or any other ecclesiastical foundation raised questions, as did the fact that he was accompanied by a Turkish dressed like a Greek or like a Christian (*vestito da Greco o christiano*). A more important question was raised by the explanation he provided regarding the purpose of his travel, which was that he had decided to convert to Orthodoxy and, consequently, his intention was to go to the abbey of Strofades (near the Ionian Island of Zakynthos), where his uncle lived, to become a monk. Conversely, the primary suspect in

32 Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia*, pp. 472-76; Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean,* pp. 103-08.

33 Gürkan, *Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean*, p. 103-04.

the second case, the janissary, in negotiating his passage between the ideological borders of the Christian and Islamic lands, used as an excuse for his arrival to Corfu his desire to become a Christian. Overall, the zeal with which three out of the four suspects under investigation here proclaimed their desire to switch to Orthodox Christianity can only be explained by their family roots in Greece and their former Orthodoxy.

Irrespective of the details surrounding the creation of the fake personal profile of the suspects, the interest of the interrogators following the arrests was mainly focused on the following: the suspects' positions prior to their arrest, their real identity, the route they had followed before they were apprehended, the persons they had come into contact with, their connections, the underlying aim of their travels, as well as their final destination. Initially, the Dominican monk, Mariano Spattafora, conceded to his examiners that he came from an Orthodox family from Modone, that he had served as an *acemoğlan* (Janissary Recruit) in Constantinople and that he had remained there for seven years. He ended up in Messina after he had fled from the Tornese castle (or Chlemoutsi) in Peloponnese with Zakynthos being the sole in-between stop. In Messina, he had worked for the nobleman Spattafora[34] after whom he was named. Afterwards, he became integrated in monastic circles and served as a housekeeper at the monastery of Saint Dominic. Mustafà, his Turkish companion, mentioned that he had served in a Turkish galleon that fell under Christian control after a naval battle. Then, he was transferred as a slave to Messina, where he worked in Marc'Antonio Colona's house for twelve years. After his master's death he was emancipated and had found temporary shelter at Saint Dominic's monastery, where he met the above-mentioned monk.

In the second case, the janissary Abdabei insisted throughout his interrogation that he was Calogiani Caticura's son from Nafplio (in ven. Napoli di Romania). When he was very young he was led by Ottomans to Constantinople in order to attend the *acemoğlan* teams. He escaped and fled to the island of Tinos, which at the time was Venetian territory. From there, he went to Crete with the help of the local rector in order to serve as a rower (in ven. scapolo) in Benetto Zuliano's galleon. When the galleon was harboured in Corfu while on a trip towards Igoumenitsa in order to purchase wood, Abdabei managed to escape with some other rowers. He took shelter at Ioannina where he was recognized by the Pasha's *voivode* (principal commander of a military force) and was sent to Constantinople to become a janissary. He served there as a

34 The noble family Spadafora was settled in Messina and members of the family had received the honour of becoming Venetian ambassadors. See Pedani, "Consoli Veneziani", p. 179.

janissary for Pasha Ibrahim and was then transferred to Athens to serve as a guard firstly of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop and then of various merchants. While on tour with the merchants he deserted and escaped to Zakynthos with the ultimate goal, as he argued, of being reintegrated into Christianity. The main motive behind this decision was the abrupt death of this janissary companion that convinced him that he did not wish to die as a Muslim. From Zakynthos he moved on to Corfu where he made contacts with Jews, Orthodox monks (e.g. a Cypriot monk who ran a school), soldiers and with the cavalier Renessi who was captain of a stradiots team (*capitano di stradioti*).[35] The janissary's companion, *acemoğlan* Mustafà, originally reported that he came from an Orthodox family and that his name was Michali (Michael). He claimed that the janissary found him on one of his tours and took him along to Constantinople in order to enlist him in the *acemoğlan* ranks. He remained at the janissary's command for the following two years and escorted him everywhere. Thus, when his superior decided to desert and turn to Christianity he followed him in order to do the same.

Of interest are the starting points of the journeys of the suspected spies, since in both cases they were under the sovereignty of Venice's two Mediterranean competitor powers: the Dominican monk and his Turkish companion had left Messina in Sicily, and the janissary and his *acemoğlan* the city of Igoumenitsa. Their travels, similarly, require attention: the Dominican had moved between Messina and Naples, interacting with important personalities of these regions (archpriests and clergymen of the Latin Church, and rich Spanish, Italian and Greek tradesmen).[36] In turn, the janissary was travelling between Athens and Constantinople acting as a guard of tradesmen, who toured regions such as Ioannina, Sagiada, Trikala, Larissa, Thessaloniki and Constantinople.[37] In these tours, he met bishops and priests whom he also called upon in his testimonies to verify everything that he had claimed was true. In particular, he mentioned a bishop from Ioannina, who gave him a let-

35 In the reports (*relazioni*) of Corfu's Venetian governors (*provveditore*) there are two captains mentioned bearing the surname Rhenesi: one is referred to in Teodoro Balbi's report (1 October 1588) as *capitanio* Antonio Rhenesi and the other in the report of Marco Molin (3 October 1590) as *governator* Zorzi Rhenesi, cavalier. See Pagratis, *Οι Εκθέσεις των Βενετών Βαΐλων,* pp. 305, 335.

36 For the Greek community in Naples see Hassiotes, "La Comunità Greca di Napoli", pp. 279-88.

37 For the commercial networks in the Balkans see Stoianovich, "Ο Κατακτητής Ορθόδοξος Βαλκάνιος Έμπορος", pp. 287-345.

ter to deliver to Corfu, as well as Athens's Archbishop whom he had served previously.[38]

The narratives of the suspects, extracted sometimes effortlessly and sometimes through torture, in combination with the testimonies of other persecuted people cast light upon some interesting micro-histories. As the documents reveal, the types of torture inflicted upon the suspects by the Venetian inquisitors included the following: the *rack* and piercing the body with hot metal. The main suspects for spying, namely Spattafora and the janissary Abdabei managed to withstand all torture and did not confess their guilt. On the contrary, their companions revealed the truth about their accomplices under duress. Soon enough, all four suspects would succumb to the wounds inflicted by their torturers.[39]

It is worth noting here that following the proclamation of the arrest of the two suspects from Messina, the Spanish ambassador Marc'Antonio Liprovosi, who was in Corfu since 1580, was quick to present himself to the *provveditore e capitano* of Corfu. His main concern was to discredit any alleged connection between the suspects and the Kingdom of Naples and, instead, connect their espionage activity with the Ottomans. In this context, he claimed that a trustworthy person in Constantinople had already informed him of the presence of a certain disguised Dominican monk in Messina. He positively identified this monk as the one arrested in Corfu, who was, thus, most probably an informant of the Ottomans. It is noteworthy that Liprovosi is attested in other later sources (1601 and 1616), where his activities are thought to have raised the suspicions and dissatisfaction of the Venetian authorities, who in turn attempted to remove him from his position and boycott his future re-election as Spain's ambassador in Corfu.[40] What is also significant to note, however, is that the Venetian Senate sent a document to Corfu's *provveditore e capitano* on 6 August 1588 commanding him to inform the Spanish King, if need be via their ambassador, and deliver a copy of the case files for both Turkish spies from Messina.[41]

38 Nikanor was Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Athens from 1571 to 1591, see Kampouroglou, *Ιστορία των Αθηνών*, p. 77.

39 ASVe, Quarantia Criminal, b. 94, numero 33 and numero 34.

40 ASVe, Senato, Secreti, filza 72, unnumbered fol. (7 July 1601). There was a similar situation in 1563 when the Venetian authorities of Corfu received a command from Venice to dismiss Habsburg agent Zuan Thomas Napolitano for his spying activities. See ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, reg. 7, fols. 128v–129r (30 July 1563), fols. 134r–134v (7 October 1563); Gürkan, "The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence", p. 27.

41 ASVe, Collegio, Lettere Secrete, filza 33, unnumbered fols. (9 July 1588, 6 August 1588). It was not unheard of for Venetian dignitaries in Corfu to cooperate with Spanish ambassadors active on the island. Such was the case, for example, in 1542 when the *provveditore*

As far as the mastermind behind each case is concerned, this was not immediately obvious but became clear during the interrogations. Despite the tortures, both the Dominican monk, Mariano, as well as the janissary Abdabei insisted on their initial testimonies, supporting the scenario of their religious change. But those associated with them revealed much more in order to distance themselves from the accused. Mustafà, the companion of the Dominican monk, admitted that the latter was indeed a spy that he [Mustafà] was not involved in anything and that, for him, Corfu was nothing but a stop on his way to his homeland, Constantinople. His testimony, however, does not shed any light on the mission of the Dominican monk nor on whether the latter acted only on behalf of the Ottomans or if he was a double agent. In the case of the janissary's companion (*acemoğlan*), he declared his ignorance in regard to the accusations that were formulated at his expense and stated that he simply followed his superior.

The only certainty about these two cases is that the Venetian authorities ultimately resolved none. In the first instance, they did not manage to locate any of the correspondence between the suspects and their mandators or their colleagues, other informants, or members of the spy network in which they belonged, and which repeatedly surfaced during the interrogations. Similarly, in the second instance, they were not able to verify the communications of the suspects with military men in Corfu. In spite of the lack of evidence, the deaths of the four suspects under torture show clearly the standing approach followed by the Venetian authorities in the face of outside threats to the safety of the state, irrespective of whether these were confirmed or not.

What was the policy of the *Serenissima*, however, when Venetian soldiers and military officers were involved in similar affairs? As already noted, fortifications played a decisive role in all spying activity in Corfu. This becomes quite obvious judging by two intelligence cases and one conspiratorial event that took place during the construction of the fortifications.

In 1576-77 two espionage cases involving soldiers underlined the importance of the new fortifications of the town of Corfu and the new fortress of *San Marco*. The first one concerns a mercenary soldier from Florence and the second a Portuguese ex-military man, Zuanne da Nugere. The soldier from Florence who served in the Venetian military units on the island was accused of spying by the Venetian authorities. Upon examination of the documents sent by the authorities of Corfu to Venice, the Head's of the Council of Ten

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of Corfu was ordered by the *Consiglio di Dieci* to leave the island on account of the relationship he had cultivated with the Spanish ambassador there. See Gürkan, "The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence", pp. 26-27.

ordered his execution. Zuanne da Nugere confessed after torture that he had been sent to the island as a spy. Both soldiers were summarily sent to their tragic end, the first by strangulation and the second by drowning. The execution of both suspected spies, further demonstrates the hard line followed by the Venetian authorities when it came to dealing with threats to the security of the state.[42]

The last case to be examined differs the two we have described because an alternative process was followed by the Venetian authorities of Corfu. The incident took place in 1588 during the completion of the fortifications and involved a Cypriot captain (in. ven. *capitano*), Pietro Antonio Brachimi, who served as a mercenary and who seems to have been involved in a conspiracy. Brachimi was a refugee from Famagusta who had served in Cyprus in various positions, such as head of the civil guard (in ven. *cernide*), as part of Constanzo Cauriol's team and, finally, as part of Nestor Martinengo's team. He ended up in Corfu as a refugee with his family and served in the new fortress of *San Marco*.[43]

Brachimi's case became known to Corfu's administration on 19 December 1588 through a document sent by the *bailo* in Constantinople stating that a Cypriot *capitano* in the New Fortress had come to a secret arrangement with the Ottomans for the purpose of conquering the island.[44] More precisely, Brachimi, on the impending appearance of the Ottoman fleet, would aid the aspiring conquerors by sabotaging key structures inside the fortress. The authorities arrested Brachimi and his two sons, who were serving as mercenaries in

42 Both soldiers were found dead: the soldier from Florence on 24 July 1576 and Zuanne da Nugere on 27 May 1577. ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, reg. 11, fol. 102r (24 July 1576), fol. 131r (27 May 1577); Preto, "La Guerra Secreta", p. 80.

43 For the case of Pietro Antonio Brachimi see ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, filza 24, unnumbered fols. (3 March 1589); ASVe, Senato, Dispacci degli Ambasciatori e residenti Costantinopoli, filza 28, numero 42, fols. 301r–302r (19 December 1588); Earl Nestor Martinengo served in Famagusta since 1570, until the fall of the town in August 1571. He was captured by the Ottoman military powers and dragged to the slave-bazaars of Syrian Tripoli. He regained his freedom thanks to the French ambassador's help, and fled to Venice. On 7 December 1571, he handed in his report to the *Collegio* regarding the fall of Famagusta. See Martinengo, N., *L'Assedio et Presa di Famagosta*; Grivaud, "Cyprus's Conquest by the Ottomans", pp. 15-16.

44 On 19 December 1588, Giovanni Moro, *bailo i*n Constantinople (1588-1590), related in a letter addressed to both Corfu's authorities and the Venetian doge that a trustworthy person (*confidenza da persona*) informed him of the secret communications between a Cypriot *capitano* that served at the New Fortress in Corfu and the Ottomans. ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Deliberazioni, Parti Secrete, filza 24, unnumbered fols. (19 December 1588); ASVe, Senato, Dispacci degli Ambasciatori e residenti Costantinopoli, filza 28, numero 42, fols. 301r–302r (19 December 1588).

Corfu's New Fortress on suspicion of espionage. The Venetian authorities of the island did not proceed with interrogations, but immediately dispatched the three Cypriots to Venice with letters and documents that were found in their residences. There, the case was reviewed by the Heads of the Council of Ten (*Capi del Consiglio di Dieci*) and after five months of regular examination of the suspects and the documents found, they informed the *bailo* in Constantinople that they had no incriminating evidence against any of them. The three men would, however, continue to be detained as prisoners until new evidence came forth either from the *bailo* himself or from the *provveditore e capitano di Corfù* or, indeed, from any other source. During the imprisonment of the suspects in Venice, Prudenza, the wife of the Cypriot *capitano* Pietro Antonio Brachimi, sent a letter to the *Consiglio di Dieci* begging them to release her husband and two sons. In the letter she claimed that her husband was wrongfully accused and that she and her daughters were suffering in Corfu, deprived of their loved ones. She also noted that she had assigned the case of her husband and sons to the lawyer Donado. At this point, the historical record loses track of the suspects.[45]

Nevertheless, in 1592, *capitano* Pietro Antonio Brachimi is found once again serving in a military unit in Corfu. More specifically, Brachimi is reported to serve as *capitano* in the Valley of Saint George between 1595 and 1599. During his service he was involved in a court dispute regarding the unfair treatement of the farmers in the Valley of Saint George. In 14 June 1598, Pietro Antonio Brachimi protested his innocence in a letter to the venetian authorities of Corfu, in which he claimed that the current accusations were false and in part due to the bad reputation he had acquired on account of previous accusations, in all probability referring to the aforementioned affair. The case papers suggest that Brachimi was not present at his trial in 1599.[46]

The case of the Cypriot *capitano* and his sons, who although accused of conspiring with the Ottomans and imprisoned in Venice they were allowed to go free and return to Corfu, raises a lot of unanswered questions. As has become clear from the cases discussed above and the general attitude of the Venetian authorities vis-à-vis the undermining of state security, the sentencing of suspects to death was common practice. It is, thus, surprising that while Brachimi and his sons were accused of conspiracy they were allowed to re-integrate themselves in the military units of the island upon their return to Corfu. With the evidence available to date, it remains unknown why the Venetian authori-

45 ASVe, Consiglio di Dieci, Parti Secrete, filza 24, unnumbered fols. (24 May 1589).

46 ASVe, Avogaria di Comun, b. 4041, n. 18.

ties decided to proceed in this manner, as well as what the ultimate fate of the Cypriot *capitano*, Pietro Antonio Brachimi, and his family was.

Conclusion

From the cases discussed above we can conclude that Corfu constituted an important destination and midway stop for people and information and, thus, was particularly appealing to individuals involved in spying or conspiratorial activities. It seems to me that it was no case a coincidence that all incidents occurred around the start and completion of the defensive works on the island. This is corroborated by similar evidence suggesting that the construction of defensive works generated intense espionage activity, like for example in Cyprus, where the Ottomans had sent spies disguised as tradesmen during the development of the defensive works there.[47] At the same time, it is difficult to avoid the correlation between the cases discussed here and the frantic spying activity that was instigated during the second half of the sixteenth century in the Adriatic Sea and Eastern Mediterranean by Petros Lantzas of Corfu.[48] Lantzas was a Venetian official in the mid-1560s, a governor of Parga in 1573, from 1575 onwards an enemy of his former employers, and intermittently until 1596 in charge of all spies that were active in the East on behalf of the Spanish regent of Naples. Finally, it is possible that he also acted as a double agent for the Spanish and the Ottomans. According to information transmitted to the Venetians in 1587 by the Greek Orthodox bishop of Monemvasia, Makarios Melissinos, Lantzas «haveva intelligentia in Corfù con alcuni suoi parenti, o altre persone, e tentava di dar quell'isola in mano del Turco» (had contact with his relatives or other persons in Corfu, and he was planning to cede the island to the Turks).[49] As mentioned previously, the Dominican monk Mariano Spattafora had close associations with Naples where he had important acquaintances. There is speculation of a connection between Spattafora and Lantza's environments, which is strengthened also by the appearance of the Spanish ambassador Liprovosi to face Corfu's authorities. While potentially acting as Lantzas's associate, he did not hesitate to 'sacrifice' the expendable Dominican monk in order to leave the Spanish intelligence network intact.

47 Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia*, p. 100; id., "La guerra secreta", p. 80.

48 Ioannou, "Από τη Γαληνοτάτη στον Καθολικότατο", pp. 277-99; Gürkan, "The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter–Intelligence", p. 28.

49 Ioannou, "Από τη Γαληνοτάτη στον Καθολικότατο", p. 293.

Furthermore, the other competitor of Venice in the Mediterranean, the Ottoman Empire, had fostered its own network of spies and informants in the same territory, as is evident by the Ottoman names mentioned in these cases. It must be stressed, nevertheless, that the stereotype of fear of the Turk, which penetrated deeply the consciousness of the Westerners, especially so for the Venetians and the Spanish, contributed to the irrational fear of the 'Turkish spy'. As very aptly noted by Paolo Preto, even a cloth or a few words in an eastern language, originating from a territory deemed dangerous by the Venetians, a strange gesture or word, even if simply misunderstood, in this intense and competitive atmosphere could be enough to lead to charges, arrests, torture, convictions and executions.[50] It should be noted that the companions of the main suspects of the two espionage cases discussed here, who coincidentally had the same Turkish name of Mustafà, only spoke Turkish and their interrogations were conducted with the help of an interpreter.

The Venetian *bailo* in Constantinople, as the chief diplomat and the head of the Venetian espionage and counter-intelligence network in the East, had an influential role to play in three of the cases discussed: that of the Dominican monk, Mariano Spattafora and his Turkish companion, that of the janissary Abdabei and the young *acemoğlan* and the suspected conspiratorial activity of the Cypriot captain in the New Fortress of Corfu, Pietro Antonio Brachimi. The last case does not constitute an isolated phenomenon; The Venetian authorities knew about other military men who had been prepared to sell their loyalty to the Ottomans. Even though the allegations against Brachimi and his sons were not confirmed during the lengthy interrogations conducted by the Heads of the Council of Ten, the fear of treachery resulted in the following order given to the *provveditore e capitano di Corfù*: only Italian soldiers would be placed from that point forward in sensitive posts in military camps. It could also be argued here that the recent rebellion of the janissaries' guard in Famagusta and Nicosia against their sovereigns in 1578 had also compelled the Venetians to be extremely careful when dealing with the possibility of similar occurrences in their own territories.[51]

Political, commercial and military spies, abroad but also in the interior of the state, were necessary to safeguard against scheming conspirators in every stated. As Italian cities evolved from free communities to *Signorie*, they created secret services alongside their bureaucratic, military and diplomatic structures. The naval Republic of Venice, due to its colonial expansion in the eastern Mediterranean, but also on account of the problems it had to face from time to

50 Preto, *Servizi Segreti di Venezia*, p. 96.

51 Hassiotes, "Αμφισβήτηση της Οθωμανικής Κυριαρχίας", pp. 189-93.

time within the Italian peninsula, invested in this specific sector fostering the development of relevant expertise. During the sixteenth century the organisation of the secret services, the police and the process of fighting crimes against the state were perfected, so that the Venetian state could respond to the evolving circumstances in the international arena, as well as in its interior. Despite its economic and political decline, Venice had to be alert, since after the war of Cyprus and the shrinking of the *Stato da Mar* it could not afford to lose any more territories. This was particularly true in the case of Corfu, where the Venetians were constantly thwarting Ottoman attacks. The importance of this island can be further underlined by the constant presence and activity of both Spanish and Ottoman agents in the area. The espionage network reveals with clarity the will of the Great Powers of the era to promote their interests by undermining the expansionist hopes of their opponents.

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CHAPTER 17

"Rather the Wealth to Support Their Status than Their Quality as Soldiers". The Social Position of the Officers in Lucca's *Ordinanze della Montagna*, 1550-1600*

Jacopo Pessina

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the social position of the officers of the Republic of Lucca's *Ordinanze della Montagna* during the second half of the sixteenth century, in order to show how the families and/or the men who were at the political, social and economic forefront in the communities of the Lucchese state controlled the militia. Lucca is a neglected but relevant case study because from the Middle Ages on its subjects had been part of a long-lasting and uninterrupted military tradition. Lucchese "attempts at economic centralization" were ineffective and the merchant oligarchy granted broad autonomies to the *contado*,[1] where there was a form of 'indirect rule'.[2] Although the Lucchese *contado* comprised no important towns having traditions of independent statehood, such as Pisa or Siena (both of which by the second half of the sixteenth century had come under Florentine rule), the Republic possessed territories which included 'semi-urban' communities dominated by a proper local elite of artisans, small traders and landowners.[3] This chapter focuses on three cases, taken as a sample, which were very different with regard to their political, social and economic conditions: the communes of Borgo a Mozzano and Camaiore, and the vicariate of Montignoso. Concerning the

* I would like to thank Prof. Arturo Pacini and Prof. Ann Katherine Isaacs to have accepted to read and to discuss with me the content of this chapter. Abbreviations: ASL – Archivio di Stato di Lucca; ASDL – Archivio Storico Diocesano di Lucca; ASPAC – Archivio Storico Parrocchia S.M. Assunta di Camaiore; ASCBM – Archivio Storico del Comune di Borgo a Mozzano; ASCC – Archivio Storico del Comune di Camaiore; ASCV – Archivio Storico del Comune di Viareggio; BCM – Biblioteca Civica di Montignoso.

1 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, p. 194.

2 The 'indirect rule' had many advantages for early modern states. The 'indirect rule' was "more economical and often more efficient then extreme centralization" because the government used "local men as intermediaries, whether or not they were technically office-holders". Aylmer, "Centre and Locality", p. 66.

3 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, pp. 165, 194.

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sixteenth-century militias, Italian historiography commonly underlines the fact that the desire for special privileges on the one hand and the dangers of war on the other meant that principally 'miserable' people decided to enlist in the militia whereas the rich looked for other trajectories, as in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.[4]

Although researchers have analysed relations between local elites and militias' fighting men for the most important Italian states (mostly for the seventeenth century), there is a lack of studies focusing on the militias' social position in small states in the sixteenth century. The Florentine case is the most studied. In 1506, Niccolò Machiavelli created the Florentine *ordinanza* in the *contado* to support Soderini's regime against its enemies. This institution was suppressed and recreated many times, until Duke Alessandro de' Medici re-established it permanently in his dominions (1534) in order to create regional bonds, as a counterweight to the oligarchies of the subject cities. The Florentine militia was one of the largest army formed of subjects to be found in Italy, and indeed by the early seventeenth century, about 17 to 22 per cent of all Italian militiamen were enlisted in it. Between the mid-sixteenth century and the 1630s, this militia was mostly composed of society's weakest members, who were attracted by the privileges offered to those who enlisted. Officers were often poor: the *alfiere* (ensign) for Empoli in 1627 was described as a '*mendico* (mendicant)'.[5] At the beginning of the seventeenth century, local families of many communities such as Poppi changed their career strategies and abandoned their activities as artisans or notaries. They sought to protect and enhance their wealth and status by investing in landed properties and gaining prestige through the militia. For the elites, office in the militia became "the opportunity for locally based upward mobility and for new positions of leadership within the community". For example, between the 1630s and the early eighteenth century, the twelve most important families of Poppi saw their members become officers in the *ordinanza*.[6]

The Papal State's militias (called *battaglie*) were reordered in the second half of the sixteenth century in order to protect the coasts from raids by Barbary corsairs. As in the case of Florence, inhabitants were persuaded to enlist by the privileges they would gain, and recruitment was principally attractive to the poorer people. In 1628-9, in the 145-men urban militia company of Orvieto, 38 per cent of the infantrymen were described as 'without property'.[7] During the

4 Angiolini, "Le Bande medicee", pp. 32-4, 41, 35n-36n. For a general overview about Italian militias, see Ilari, "La difesa dello Stato", 7-70; Pezzolo, "Le 'arme proprie' in Italia", pp. 55-72.

5 Angiolini, "Le Bande medicee", pp. 17-8, 36n. Benadusi, "Career Strategies", 96.

6 Benadusi, "Career Strategies", 89-90, 96, 99, the quote is on page 99.

7 Brunelli, "Poteri e privilegi", 106-7, 110-3.

sixteenth century, the captains were normally foreigners in order to avoid any local favoritism.[8] However, none of the soldiers "riconosceva 'naturalmente' l'autorità" of these officers, so, starting from the early seventeenth century, militia officers were chosen among the members of the local elites, which often meant having leaders without war experience. This contradictory way of managing the papal *battaglie* had dramatic results in wartime. The companies were inefficient and did not fight well on the battlefield, as was seen for example during the First War of Castro (1641-4), when the papal militias retreated during the Battle of Pitigliano (24 October 1643).[9]

Mario Rizzo has analysed the urban militia of Pavia in the seventeenth century. Reordered by Cardinal Albornoz in 1635, this militia was formed of 1,500-2,000 soldiers subdivided in 8 or 10 companies, depending on the period. The militiamen enlisted belonged to the middle and lower classes, but the rank of captain was given to members of the most important families of the urban elite, who controlled the military cadres for "i vantaggi economici, clientelari e di prestigio".[10]

A general overview of Italian militias seems to show that during the sixteenth century members of the weakest part of the society enlisted in order to gain privileges. But by the early seventeenth century, socio-political changes persuaded local elites to take up the role of officers in the militia. If we take a closer look at other European states, such as England, we see a different trend emerging. The militia was the base of the Elizabethan military organisation. During the second half of the sixteenth century, the Tudor monarchy created a national system of regulated recruitment which operated "under gentry commissioners". The English territory was subdivided in recruitment areas placed under a lieutenant who was "drawn from the top ranks" of local landowners.[11] The resulting army numbered about 40,000 soldiers in 1590,[12] and the officers' "military rank was as often as not in direct relation to landed wealth and status".[13]

8 In early stage, the militia's cadres were formed following "criteri clientelari" and the officers were recruited between the local elites, but this practice was a disaster. Ibid., 114. Quote translation: "clientelistic criteria".

9 Ibid., 113-7, 120, the quote is on page 114. Quote translation: "recognised [the] 'natural' authority".

10 Rizzo, "Istituzioni militari", 169-70, 174-9, the quote is on page 177. Quote translation: "economic, clientelistic, and prestige advantages". On the Milanese militia, see Maffi, "Las milicias del Estado de Milán", pp. 245-67.

11 Braddick, *State Formation*, p. 182.

12 Pezzolo, "Le 'arme proprie' in Italia", p. 56.

13 Newman, "The Royalist Officer Corps", 946.

This chapter analyses the Lucchese *Ordinanze della Montagna*, a militia instituted by Lucca in the mountainous part of its *contado* (called *Montagna*). The *Sei Miglia*, the area around Lucca, was "directly administered from the city". Instead, in the *contado* there were "free landholding peasants, organized in their own communities" and consolidated local elites.[14] This study is based on three types of archival sources, analysed for a ten-year period which has proved adequate to support our argument. The first source comprises the muster lists (*rolli*), written by the militia chancellors. These lists give us the names of 38 officers. They include as 'officers' corporals as well as the higher ranks because in the sixteenth century the military hierarchy was less clearly defined than in a later period.[15] Furthermore, the rank of corporal was the highest position that in practice could be reached by the leaders of small villages whose careers were blocked by the elite members from the larger community where the company was based.[16] The second source is constituted by the public records of the local council meetings, which allow us to form an idea of the political involvement of the officers in their communities. The final category of sources is the fiscal records, which allow us to measure the officers' wealth, at least on a comparative basis with regard to their own community. It is important, in fact, to underline that the "[fiscal] obligations of some communities were greater (or, at least different) from those of others", because each district established "the relation between fiscal assessments and property values".[17] From the beginning of the sixteenth century on, the Republic of Lucca did not order the compilation of a general cadastre; indeed, the last one was compiled in 1461. It is impossible to compare the exact amounts paid because there were many differences from one community to another, so in this chapter to establish their relative wealth within their own community we will look to the percentage of taxes owed by specific persons and families.[18]

The chapter is divided in two sections. The first is a general overview of the military system of the Republic of Lucca. The second part regards the social

14 Isaacs, "States in Tuscany and Veneto", p. 298.

15 Furthermore, in early modern armies, the officer rank usually indicated an NCO. Hale, *War and Society*, p. 131.

16 Even in 1744, the inhabitants of Viareggio asked Lucca to institute a company so that "caporali e sergente crescessero di grado per anzianità in questa compagnia come nelle altre squadre". Quote translation: "corporals and sergeant could improve their rank through seniority in this company as in the other squads". ASCV, *Comunità*, vol. 2, fol. 19*r*.

17 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, p. 148.

18 Ibid., pp. 205, 207. On Lucchese fiscal sources, see Leverotti, *Popolazione, famiglie, insediamento*, pp. 15-28.

position of the militia officers in the three sample territories of Borgo a Mozzano, Camaiore and the vicariate of Montignoso.

From the end of the fifteenth century and the early sixteenth century, the Italian states started to reorder their militias in order to be able to deploy them in formations such as those organised by the Germans and the Swiss. These reforms were necessary to modernise equipment and tactics, because Italian infantry still fought in open order with crossbows as well as firearms. It is possible to identify two distinct phases in the introduction of this new type of militia equipped with arquebuses and/or pikes. The first was during the Italian Wars (1494-1559), when the republics and some lords such as Cesare Borgia formed fighting units of their subjects called *bande*, *battaglie*, *cernide* or *ordinanze*. These soldiers were drilled by professional officers to learn new military tactics, and were enticed to enlist by many fiscal and social privileges such as tax exemptions and special juridical status.[19] The peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) opened in Italy a détente phase during which governments decreased their war expenditures and reordered their militias.[20] Initially, militias were formed largely in central and southern Italy to defend coasts against raids by Barbary corsairs; after that the process accelerated in northern Italy as well. This kind of military organisation, based on the states' own subjects, was very cheap,[21] and made it possible to pay a smaller number of mercenaries. Furthermore, the system gave states better military control over their own territories. The militiamen were employed as garrison units and guarded borders during peacetime. In case of war, these soldiers could guard fortifications, while professional troops were sent to fight on the battlefield. For the same reasons, militias formed of subjects could also carry out effective public safety functions in guarding against bandits.[22] Finally, the states adopted militias as part of specific political strategies. The Republic of Venice, for example, created the *cernide* in order to integrate the growing *corpi territoriali*, who "stavano mettendo in discussione le tradizionali prerogative dei ceti eminenti urbani nella terraferma".[23] In Piedmont, the leadership of the militia was given to the most

19 Ilari, "La difesa dello Stato", 8-25.

20 Ibid., 45-70. On the Italian political-military situation after the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis, see Hanlon, *The Twilight of a Military Tradition*, pp. 17-69.

21 For example, in the early eighteenth century, in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany the mercenary units and the militias costed, respectively, 163,200 *scudi* and 18,300 *scudi*. Angiolini, "Le Bande medicee", p. 24.

22 Ibid., pp. 21-8.

23 Pezzolo, "Le 'arme proprie' in Italia", p. 56. Quote translation: "were calling into question the eminent urban classes' traditional prerogatives in the *terraferma*".

trusted nobles, "evidenziando così l'equilibrio raggiunto tra duca, sudditi e aristocrazia".[24] In Sicily, instead, the viceroy instituted the *nuova militia* to contrast the military power of the island's barons.[25]

The Lucchese Republic is one of the most interesting Italian cases because it competes with Venice as the longest continuous user of pike-and-shot militia units. Lucca had a long tradition of employing subjects for military functions. At the end of the fourteenth century, the *cerne del contado*, a rural militia of 2,674 persons, were reordered.[26] The *cerne* were used during wartime or to guard Lucca. In 1450, during the conflict with the Este, the Republic called up a part of the *cerne del contado* and sent them to reconquer Gallicano.[27] At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Italian political-military situation was such that Lucca decided to constitute a permanent army formed by militiamen. In 1512, the *battaglioni* were established: two pike-and-shot units, each comprising 500 inhabitants of the *Sei Miglia*, placed under the command of captains Baccio del Fava and Piero Sardo. The soldiers were exempted from the salt and *testatico* taxes, and they could not be imprisoned for debts.[28] After the Straccioni Uprising (1531-2), the *battaglioni* were replaced by the *Ordinanze delle Sei Miglia*, a huge force of 1,200 men split into six companies. During the 1530s, the Barbary corsairs' offensive increased, so the Republic of Lucca established the *ordinanze* of Montignoso (1535) and Camaiore (1536) for a total amount of 390 soldiers in order to protect the coast. Then, in 1541, Francesco Burlamacchi instituted the *Ordinanze della Montagna* in the *contado*, hoping to overturn Medici power and set up a confederation of independent states in central Italy. Finally, the urban militia was reordered in 1570.[29]

During the sixteenth century, the Republic created in its *contado* six recruitment districts called *ordinanze* (Borgo, Camaiore, Castiglione, Montignoso, Val di Lima and Val di Riana) each one composed of from one to three vicariates (*vicarie*). These districts, depending on the year, permitted to raise a field army of from 3,000 to 8,000 infantrymen; they could be equipped with arquebuses, halberds, muskets or pikes. The *ordinanza* was an administrative formation

24 Ibid., p. 57. Quote translation: "thus highlighting the balance reached between Duke, subjects and aristocracy".

25 Ibid., pp. 56-7.

26 Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, pp. 120-2.

27 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, p. 147n.

28 About the *battaglioni*, see ASL, *Consiglio Generale*, vol. 29, fols. 118*r*-119*v*.

29 Regarding the Republic of Lucca's military organisation during the sixteenth century, see Dianda, "Le milizie della Repubblica lucchese", 44-54; Heinrich, "Die Luccheser Bergmilizen", 137-43. Finally, for Lucchese coastal defensive system, see Lenci, *Lucca, il mare*, pp. 79-93.

and had a variable number of companies. The company was the basic tactical unit composed of a varying number of squads (generally 5 to 6). The squads had a number of soldiers probably in proportion with the adult male inhabitants (the ratio was at least one militiaman every five male inhabitants), and were known by the name of the commune where the infantrymen were recruited. Each *ordinanza* was led by a *commissario* (a civilian officer) and a colonel. The *commissario* (sent from Lucca) was responsible for the administrative management, and his period of office lasted from one to three years. This officer called the soldiers of his *ordinanza* to arms, summoned them for a general inspection (once a year), granted leave of absence, and judged crimes committed by the militiamen. The *commissario* was helped by a chancellor, who (in different books) kept the muster lists, registered the soldiers' leaves of absence and their penalties. The colonel, a foreign professional officer, was responsible for the military management, and received an average monthly wage of 7 *scudi* and 35 *bolognini*. He was obliged to live in his district and the communities had to pay for his lodging and often other living expenses. At least twice a month, the colonel had to inspect a company, in rotation, and he drilled the infantrymen after the muster.[30]

With the exception of the colonel, all soldiers were subjects of Lucca. The officers' ratings were: sergeant major, captain, lieutenant, ensign, sergeant, chancellor, drummer and corporal. Theoretically, the military ranks were given by the *Anziani* (the executive authority), but in practice the desires of the local powers were respected. As the commissioner Bartolomeo Cenami wrote in 1613, "gli offiziali delle milizie si fanno per ordini di grado in grado trapassando da caporale fino al capitanato o per considerarsi, nel distribuire questi luochi, più tosto la facultà per sostenere la dignità che le qualità del soldato".[31] The *descritti* (those enlisted) had many privileges. They could carry arms in the *contado*, they were exempted from both the obligation to work on public projects and the *testatico* tax, and they could not be imprisoned for debts. When the militiamen were called to war, they were paid with a specific amount of money, which was decided beforehand on each occasion.[32]

The *ordinanze* fought on the battlefield during the Garfagnana Wars (1602-3 and 1613) against the Este's professional soldiers, because the other Italian

30 ASL, *Consiglio Generale*, vol. 470, fols. 126*v*-127*r*, 130*r*-130*v*; ibid., vol. 472, fol. 41*r*; ASL, *Milizie della Campagna*, vol. 35; ibid., vol. 39.

31 Sodini, *Soldati lucchesi*, p. 24. Quote translation: "the militia officers go from one rank to another, passing from corporal up to captain, or else these positions [military ranks] are given considering rather the wealth to support their status than their quality as soldiers".

32 ASL, *Consiglio Generale*, vol. 470, fols. 127*r*, 128*r*-130*v*.

states did not allow Lucca to hire mercenaries.[33] Considering the odds, the militias fought well because they prevented an invasion by the Este army, but in Bartolomeo Cenami's reports, written after wars, we find a less than positive description of the Republic's troops. The infantrymen were "trovati la maggior parte malissimamente esercitati nell'adoperare i schioppi",[34] they had old equipment, such as arquebuses which were "piccoletti all'antica, mal condizionati che sparato che è una volta, o due, resta inutile o per stiopparsi la canna o per altro sinistro".[35] Lucchese soldiers could not fire well and the "gran parte di quelli che sono morti in queste fazioni sono stati ammazzati dai nostri medesimi o si sono feriti da fra loro".[36] Finally, many officers had never fought before and, wrote Bartolomeo Cenami, were inexpert.[37]

The Republic of Lucca's military organisation followed that of the *contado*'s districts (vicariates), which were nine during the sixteenth century. Each vicariate (*vicaria*) had administrative, military and fiscal duties, and was composed by many communes. Each commune sent one representative (*sindico*) to the general assembly (*parlamento*), which was chaired by a Lucchese officer (a *vicario*, a *commissario* or, less often, a *podestà*) elected for six months or, in some cases, a year. The officer was supposed to live in the seat of the vicariate, where he presided over a civil and criminal tribunal of the first instance. The official was helped in his duties by a chancellor and a retinue of *birri* (armed men). The vicariates were supposed to maintain the bridges, fortifications and roads located in their district.[38] But the vicariates' most important responsibility was to raise money for taxes. It seems that Lucca did not have an oppressive fiscal regime in its subject areas.[39] This fiscal system was based on direct taxation through the *estimo*, the *testatico* and the salt tax,[40] on which

33 For the Garfagnana Wars (1602-13), see Hanlon, *The Twilight of a Military Tradition*, pp. 61-2; Sodini, *Soldati lucchesi*, pp. 16-24.

34 Sodini, *Soldati lucchesi*, p. 24. Quote translation: "found, in the most part, very badly drilled in using *schioppi*".

35 Ibid. Quote translation: "small, old fashioned and such in a bad state that after use [for] one or two shots, they could no longer be used because either the barrel breaks or for other damage".

36 Ibid. Quote translation: "most part of those who died in the fighting were killed by ourselves, or, they were injured by each other".

37 Ibid.

38 Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti*, p. 295.

39 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, p. 148.

40 The *estimo* was a properties' taxation (immoveable and moveable assets). The *testatico* was paid by people between 18 and 70 years. Finally, the salt tax regarded all people over

were added the communities' own taxes, and amounts paid in order to become local officials and for using communal properties.[41]

The communities chosen for our three case studies are very different from one another. Borgo a Mozzano is located along an ancient Roman road which links the Garfagnana Valley with Lucca and Pisa. It was an important commercial hub for merchandise such as iron which was purchased by sword-smiths from Villa Basilica to produce weapons. In the second half of the sixteenth century, Borgo a Mozzano was a "highly stratified" community with more than a thousand inhabitants. The people worked as artisans or shopkeepers, and they were also landowners of small olive groves, mulberry orchards for sericulture and vineyards.[42] The council of Borgo a Mozzano was composed by five *governatori* and two *sindici* elected, depending on the period, every six months or every year, and a chancellor, for a total of eight people. In 1577, the five squads company of the vicariate of Borgo a Mozzano counted 263 militiamen, and that commune's squad itself had 72 soldiers led by a corporal.[43]

Camaiore is close to the coast, and it was a "semi-urban"[44] community with 3,000 inhabitants in 1560, second only to Lucca.[45] The town-plan had the form of a rectangle (as a new community founded by Lucca in the Middle Ages), divided in six districts (*sesti*), from which the public officers were drawn. The local elite formed a 'communal aristocracy' which controlled public life and was described in Bianco Bianchi's *Le storie antiche della Valle di Camaiore e degli uomini illustri di detta terra* in 1528.[46] The commune was administrated by four local officers (*capitani*) who were elected for three months and had executive power. They called the council meetings and decided which topics could be discussed. The communal council was composed of thirty members – five for each *sesto* – drawn by sort every six months. Camaiore was self-sufficient thanks to the presence of many different artisanal activities such as weaving and ironworking. Furthermore, this was the only one vicariate comprising fertile hills and plains including valuable olive groves. For this reason, many citizens of Lucca had properties there, and were interested in supporting

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5 years (the so-called *bocche*). Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti*, p. 299; Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, p. 205.

41 Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti*, p. 299; Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, pp. 146-8, 153-5.

42 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, pp. 172, 175-6, the quote is on page 172. ASDL, *Visite Pastorali*, vol. 24, fol. 250*v*.

43 For the militia muster, see ASL, *Milizie della Campagna*, vol. 36, 1577, fols. 146*r*-157*r*; for the Borgo a Mozzano squad, see ibid., fols. 146*r*-148*r*.

44 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, p. 172.

45 ASDL, *Visite Pastorali*, vol. 18, p. 399. Isaacs, "States in Tuscany and Veneto", pp. 295, 298.

46 Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti*, pp. 272-3, 298, 310-1, 328.

local manufacturing or commercial activities.[47] In 1560 the militia company had 125 infantrymen, who were distributed in six squads, each drawn from one of the town's six districts.[48]

The vicariate of Montignoso was a coastal *exclave* of the Republic of Lucca and controlled the surrounding area through the presence of the Aghinolfi castle: on the one hand Montignoso was important for monitoring the coast, and on the other it was necessary to ensure security for those travelling along the Via Francigena. This vicariate was a border region for Lucca and it was granted many privileges to prevent it from transferring its allegiance to another state, as Pietrasanta had done in 1513. Its inhabitants enjoyed many exemptions, such as not paying the *gabella* and the salt tax,[49] and they also could carry arms in the *contado*. This was a poor and under-populated area which counted only 700 'souls'.[50] People were scattered over the territory, many of them lived inside and around the castle, which was distant from the village center where the Lucchese official's building was located. Montignoso's economy was based on pastoralism and mixed farming of grain, olives, grapes and mulberries. The vicariate and the communal council of Montignoso were one and the same, and they were composed of one man per family. During the sixteenth century, the local elite restricted political participation and created a small council of eleven members (nine councilors and two *officiali*) elected every six months, alongside the general one. The local elite was worried that it would lose its dominant role in the community because of the increasing pressure of a large number of immigrants, attracted by the fiscal exemptions granted by Lucca.[51] Montignoso was the first district in the *contado* to have a pike-and-shot militia company, formed of ninety-men in 1535. At the end of sixteenth century, the *ordinanza* was a 190 arquebusier-strong company, led by a foreign captain (instead the colonel).[52]

47 Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, pp. 116-7, 172, 178, 194.

48 For militia's company, see ASL, *Milizie della Campagna*, vol. 35, 1560, fols. 1*v*-6*v*.

49 Since 1579, salt trade was forbidden in the district. Then it was established that each year the licence to sell salt in the district would be subcontracted. Sforza, *Memorie storiche*, pp. 185-6.

50 Freggia, *La visita apostolica*, p. 208.

51 In the early seventeenth century, for example, one-fourth of the 800 inhabitants of the commune of Montignoso were '*forastieri* (foreigners)' and this meant a new balance in the vicariate. Sforza, *Memorie storiche*, p. 214. On the relationship between *uomini di commune* and *forastieri*, see Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti*, pp. 327, 329-32.

52 Sforza, *Memorie storiche*, pp. 166-70, 174-5, 185-6, 214, 291-2. For the *ordinanza* of Montignoso's statute, see ibid., pp. 311-6. The militia muster is in ASL, *Milizie della Campagna*, vol. 37, 1590, fols. 303*r*-310*v*.

TABLE 17.1 *Borgo a Mozzano, Camaiore, Montignoso: militia organisation.* SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA,* VOL. 35, 1560, FOLS. 1*V*-6*V*; IBID., VOL. 36, 1577, FOLS. 146*R*-148*R*; IBID., VOL. 37, 1590, FOLS. 303*R*-310*V*.

1 Territory	2 Year	3 Soldiers		4 Corporals	5 Staff company	6 Total
		Arquebusiers	Pikemen			
Borgo a Mozzano	1577	44	28	1	8	81
Camaiore	1560	63	48	6	8	125
Motignoso	1590	175	–	8	7	190
Total		282	76	15	23	396

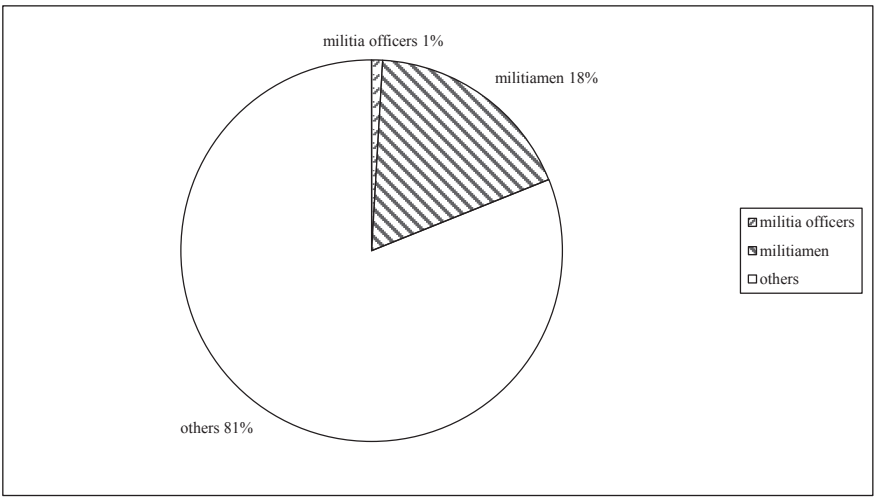
The militia data analysed is shown in the table above, whereas the analytic data on the military cadres appear in the appendix in the tables 17.2, 17.3, and 17.4.

The fiscal sources are very different. In Borgo a Mozzano there is a tax assessment (*estimo*) volume of 1575, which gives the exact amount of taxes paid to Lucca by the commune's 152 households. The total is *circa* 337 *lire*, which means an average of about 2.2 *lire* per household. Nineteen per cent of the taxes was paid by the 29 militiamen households, of whom the 2 officers were taxed 1 per cent of the total (Graph 17.1).[53] In Camaiore, the commune's 1560 tax assessment volume shows the relative value of the property of the 344 households, but we do not have absolute figures of payments actually made, since the amounts levied on the basis of the assessment was decided according to local necessities. In any case, in 1563, the landowners paid *circa* 2,795 *lire*, on average *circa* 8.1 *lire* per household. The *ordinanza* infantrymen who had property were 52, of whom 9 were officers and the latter paid 2.6 per cent (Graph 17.2).[54] Finally, for Montignoso there is a volume which records the vicariate's general tax (*colta*) which is the most exact, as it reports all the taxes paid by the inhabitants in 1590. The 344 families were taxed *circa* 5,890 *lire*, on average *circa* 17 *lire* per household; 105 were militiamen, and the 11 officers paid 9 per cent of the *colta* (Graph 17.3).[55] Placing the officers' data (see the table above, columns 4 and 5) in correspondence with the fiscal sources, it appears that only 22 of the 38 were taxpayers.

53 ASCBM, *Estimo del Borgo*, vol. 164.

54 ASCC, *Libro dell'estimo*, vol. 549.

55 BCM, *Tasse*, vol. 38, fols. 204*r*-213*v*, 217*r*-228*v*.



GRAPH 17.1 *Borgo a Mozzano: assessment tax, 1575* (*militia*). SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 36, 1577, FOLS. 146*R*-148*R*; ASCBM, *ESTIMO DEL BORGO*, VOL. 164.

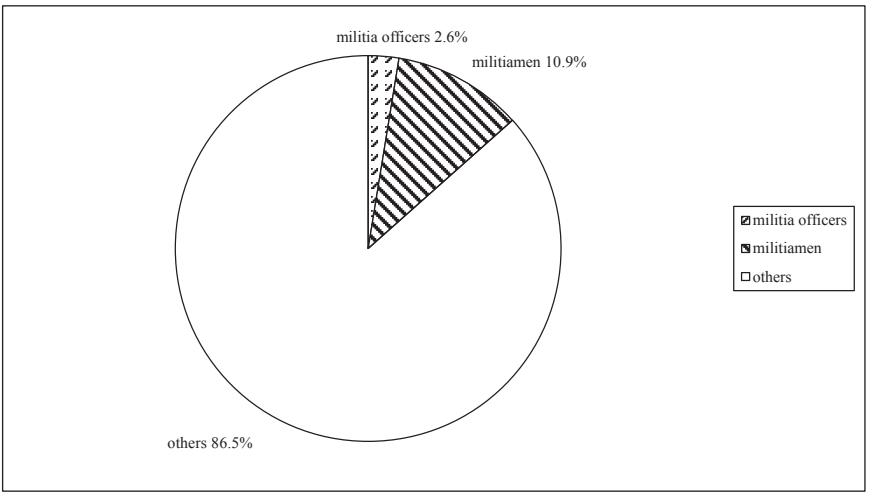
If we examine the fiscal data for the officers whose names we have identified we see that there was not always a correspondence between military rank and level of personal wealth. In fact, there are some cases where the person superior in rank was poorer than those lower in the hierarchy. For example, Camaiore's lieutenant Nicolao Giannini had property valued *circa* 3 *lire*, while corporals Bartolomeo Bingongiari, Pochello Bonuccelli, Nicolao Lemmetti and Bartolomeo Rossi were richer than he, having lands valued, respectively, about 9 *lire*, 10 *lire*, 7 *lire*, 11 *lire*.[56] Also, there was not an understandable and direct relationship between military rank and the wealth of the community. Borgo a Mozzano's captain Leonardo Crestoni and its lieutenant Francesco Ricci were taxed, respectively, *circa* 1 *lira* and 2 *lire*, which was much less than 18 *lire* paid each year by the *speziale*[57] Francesco Mariani, whose family was the most important in this commune.[58] In Camaiore, sergeant major Marco Orsucci, exponent of the community's most important lineage, was not the richest member of his family, because first place belonged to heirs of *messer* Domenico Orsucci, who paid about 74 *lire*.[59] Even captain Michelangelo Santucci was without property and was included in the family of his father Porfidio. Finally,

56 ASCC, *Libro dell'estimo*, vol. 549, fols. 4*v*, 13*r*, 31*r*, 40*r*, 57*v*.

57 The *speziali* "were apothecaries and pharmacists, who also sold miscellaneous merchandise". For more information about *speziali*, see Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, p. 172n.

58 ASCBM, *Estimo del Borgo*, vol. 164, fols. 19*r*-20*r*, 72*v*, 130*v*, 135*r*-136*v*, 159*v*.

59 ASCC, *Libro dell'estimo*, vol. 549, fols. 33*r*, 35*r*-35*v*.



GRAPH 17.2 *Camaiore: assessment tax, 1563* (*militia*). SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 35, 1560, FOLS. 1*v*-6*v*; ASCC, *LIBRO DELL'ESTIMO*, VOL. 549.

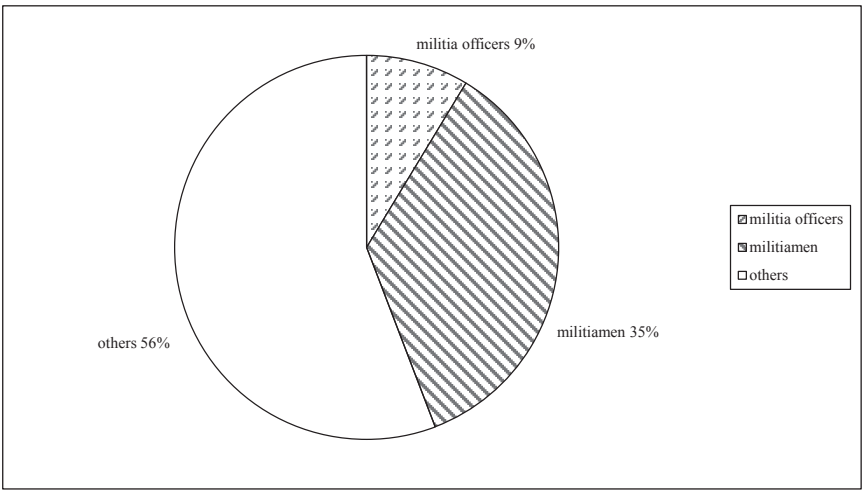
the highest taxpayer of the vicariate of Montignoso was corporal Fabio Bertolucci, who paid about 382 *lire* in 1590, whereas lieutenant Vincenzo Varesi was taxed 'only' for *circa* 16 *lire*, less than chancellor Bartolomeo Bertagnini (*circa* 23 *lire*) and sergeant Piero Mazzei (*circa* 23 *lire*).[60]

So, apparently there was no direct connection between military rank and wealth, but the scenario changes if we enlarge our analysis to the officers' families' wealth, which was often divided between many members. According to Delille, "il faudrait pouvoir tenir compte du développement lignager de chaque famille".[61] In fact, there was a difference if the major part of the family's properties was in the hands of a single person or if it was subdivided among many people.

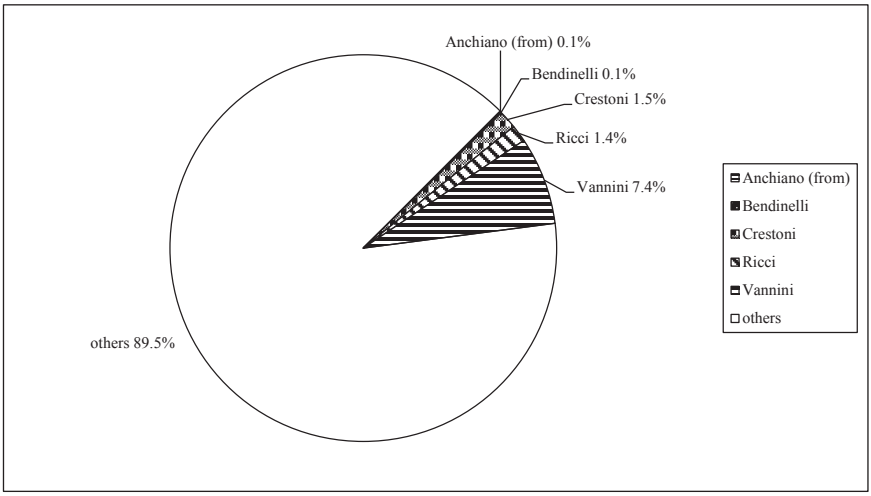
In Borgo a Mozzano, the five officers' families were assessed for 10.5 per cent of the taxes to be levied (Graph 17.4). The thirteen officers' families of Camaiore were assessed for 26.80 per cent of the taxes to be paid (Graph 17.5). Finally, the fourteen officers' relatives in Montignoso paid a bit less than one-third (27.36 per cent) of the *colta* (Graph 17.6). In spite of appearances, the militias' military cadres were composed of members of the wealthiest local families, who were keen to control the units from the inside. But, if we shift our attention to

60 BCM, *Tasse*, vol. 38, fols. 205*r*-205*v*, 207*r*, 209*r*, 213*r*, 218*r*, 220*r*, 222*v*, 227*v*.

61 Delille, *Le maire et le prieur*, p. 141. Quote translation: "it would be necessary to be able to take into account the developments of the lineage of each family".



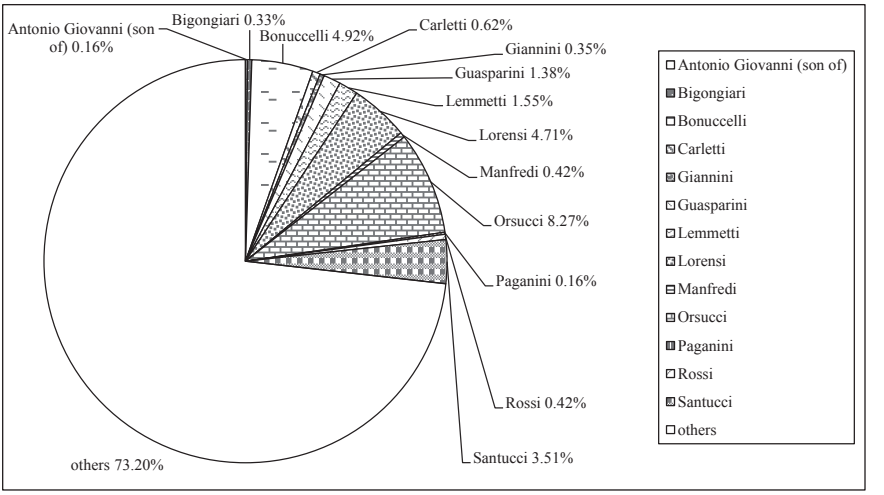
GRAPH 17.3 *Montignoso: colta, 1590* (*militia*). SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 37, 1590, FOLS. 303*R*-310*V*; BCM, *TASSE*, VOL. 38, FOLS. 204*R*-213*V*, 217*R*-228*V*.



GRAPH 17.4 *Borgo a Mozzano: assessment tax, 1575* (*families*). SOURCE: ASCBM, *ESTIMO DEL BORGO*, VOL. 164.

other parameters (political and social), this trend will be easily understandable.

The analysis of data relative to political involvement immediately gives clearer results than does the fiscal analysis. In the period examined for Borgo a Mozzano (1571-80), there were 103 available seats at the council meetings, which were taken by 65 different people. The militiamen occupied 43 per cent of the seats during this decade and, precisely, the three militia officers elected



GRAPH 17.5 *Camaiore: assessment tax, 1563* (*families*). SOURCE: ASCC, *LIBRO DELL'ESTIMO*, VOL. 549.

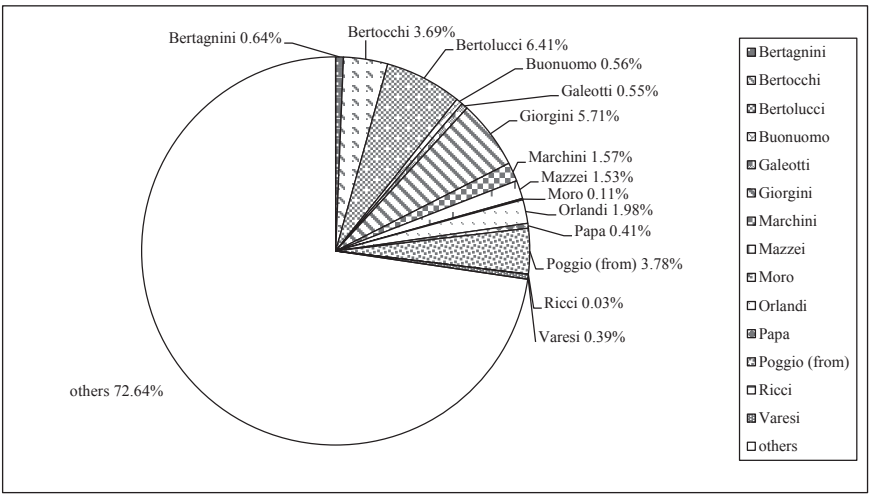
enjoyed 9 per cent of all the seats (Graph 17.7). Even more interesting is looking at the number of seats occupied by entire families, because about one-fifth (21 per cent) of them were taken by four militia officers' families (Graph 17.8).[62] For Camaiore the decade 1555-64 was examined, considering the council seats and also the *capitano* position. The 756 seats[63] were filled by 210 people, of which 74 were also militiamen. Twelve officers of the militia held 10 per cent of the total seats (Graph 17.9). If we enlarge our analysis of political involvement to officers' families it appears that eleven families controlled about one-third (35 per cent) of the seats (Graph 17.10).[64] With regard to Montignoso we examined the small council's public records between 1591 and 1600,[65] considering both council members and *officiali*. In this poor and isolated commune placed at the border of the Lucchese state, the elite's social control was strengthened, as said before, by their wealth. In the period analysed, 60 out of the 99 people elected were militiamen, so they possessed 60 per cent of the seats (Graph 17.11). Then, there were ten officers of the *ordinanza* who were elected to 15 per cent of the available seats, whereas twelve officers' families controlled 44 per cent of

62 ASCBM, *Borgo deliberazioni*, vol. 51, fols. 188*r*-226*v*.

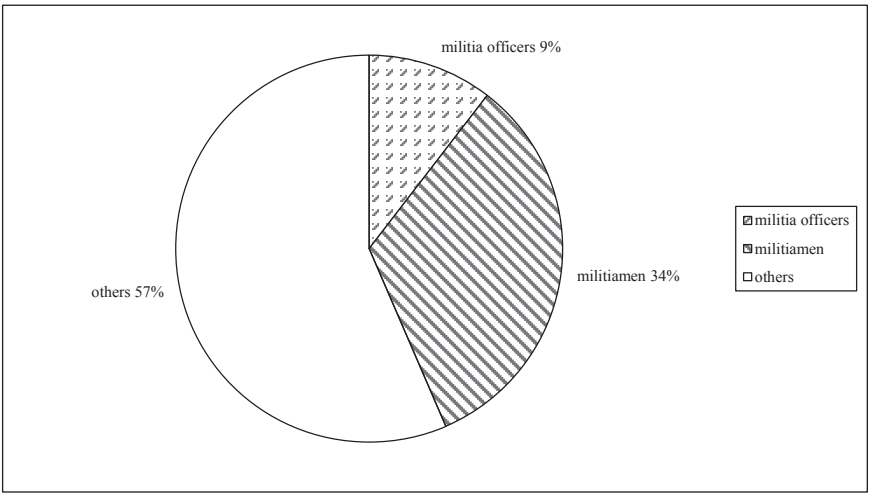
63 Unfortunately, the *capitani* for the trimester January-March 1562 are missing.

64 ASCC, *Deliberazioni*, vol. 125, fols. 239*v*-284*v*; ibid., vol. 126, fols. 2*r*-284*v*.

65 Unfortunately, the councilors and the *officiali* for 1590 are missing. So we analysed the decade 1591-1600, considering also that previous years' records are fragmentary.



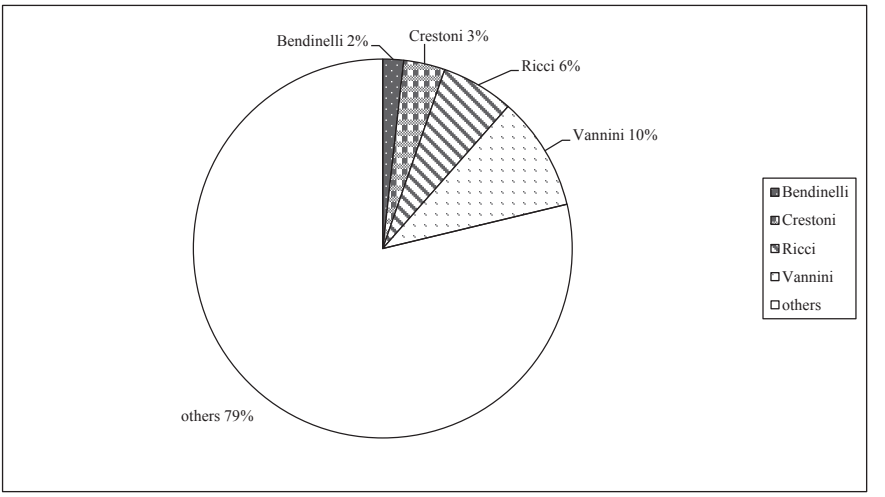
GRAPH 17.6 *Montignoso: colta, 1590* (*families*). SOURCE: BCM, *TASSE*, VOL. 38, FOLS. 204*R*-213*V*, 217*R*-228*V*.



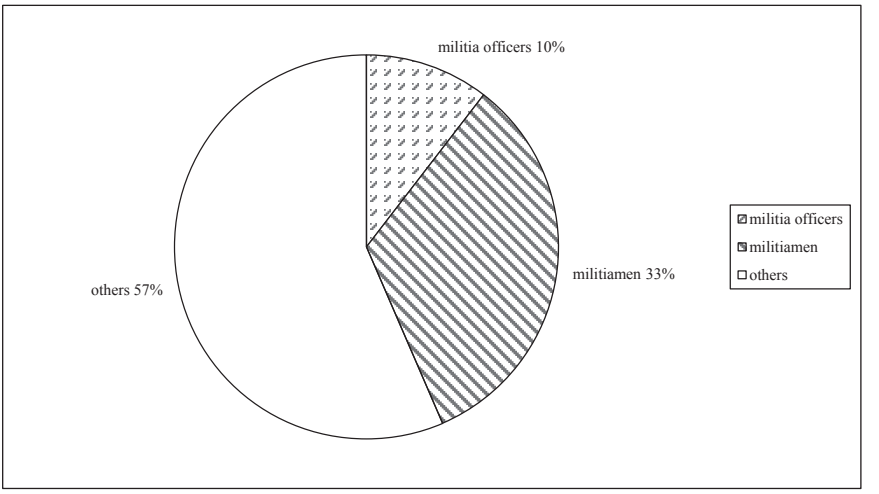
GRAPH 17.7 *Borgo a Mozzano: political involvement, 1571-80* (*militia*). SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 36, 1577, FOLS. 146*R*-148*R*; ASCBM, *BORGO DELIBERAZIONI*, VOL. 51, FOLS. 188*R*-226*V*.

the seats (Graph 17.12).[66] Probably, the particular geographical situation of Montignoso and the many privileges granted to inhabitants, as we have seen, attracted immigrants, and strengthened the phenomenon of the local elite control because it was worried about losing its leading role, and apparently worked hard to retain its power.

66 BCM, *Atti*, vol. 4, fols. 41*v*-268*r*; ibid., vol. 5, fols. 2*r*-134*r*.

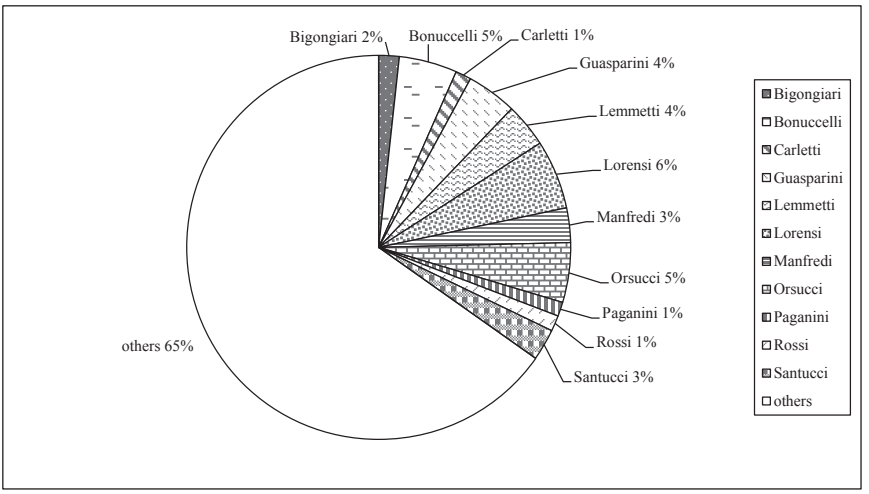


GRAPH 17.8 *Borgo a Mozzano: political involvement, 1571-80 (families).* SOURCE: ASCBM, *BORGO DELIBERAZIONI*, VOL. 51, FOLS. 188*R*-226*V*.

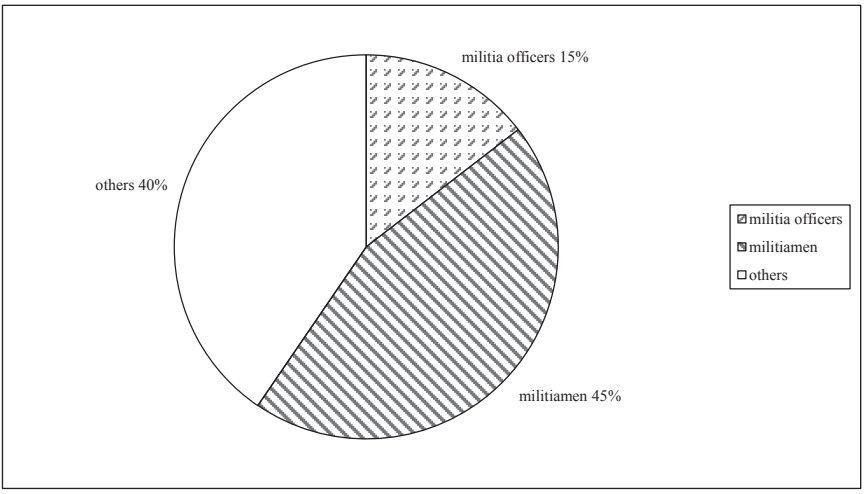


GRAPH 17.9 *Camaiore: political involvement, 1555-64 (militia).* SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 35, 1560, FOLS. 1*V*-6*V*; ASCC, *DELIBERAZIONI*, VOL. 125, FOLS. 239*V*-284*V*; IBID., VOL. 126, FOLS. 2*R*-284*V*.

Social preeminence was another key factor in obtaining high rank in the militia. This factor was more closely identified with the individual than were the other two. For example, the sergeant major of the *ordinanza* of Camaiore and the sergeant of the town's company were, respectively, Marco and Giuseppe Orsucci. In the period examined they both had many important assignments



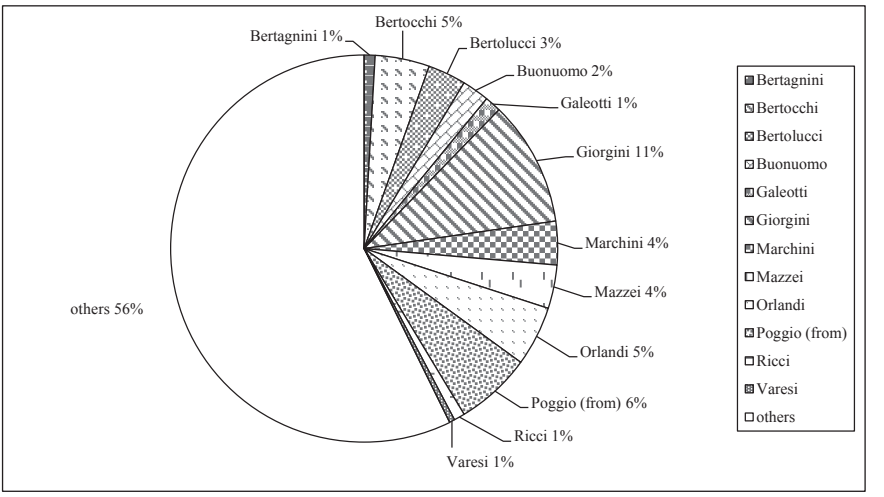
GRAPH 17.10 *Camaiore: political involvement, 1555-64* (*families*). SOURCES: ASCC, *DELIBERAZIONI*, VOL. 125, FOLS. 239*V*-284*V*; IBID., VOL. 126, FOLS. 2*R*-284*V*.



GRAPH 17.11 *Montignoso: political involvement, 1591-1600* (*militia*). SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 37, 1590, FOLS. 303*R*-310*V*; BCM, *ATTI*, VOL. 4, FOLS. 41*V*-268*R*; IBID., VOL. 5, FOLS. 2*R*-134*R*.

such as in 1559, when Marco Orsucci was appointed to make the new *estimo*.[67] But they were also members of the Orsuccis, probably the most important family of the entire *contado*. They were Lucchese citizens although they lived in Camaiore, where they had great influence on public life. For example, Marco

67 ASCC, *Deliberazioni*, vol. 126, fol. 89*v*.



GRAPH 17.12 *Montignoso: political involvement, 1591-1600 (families).* SOURCES: BCM, *ATTI*, VOL. 4, FOLS. 41*V*-268*R*; IBID., VOL. 5, FOLS. 2*R*-134*R*.

was sergeant major in the *ordinanza* of Camaiore because, assuming Braddick's opinion on English militia, nobody "would bear arms under the command of a social inferior".[68] The Orsuccis had come to Camaiore at the end of the fourteenth century, and consolidated their power in the following century. They became rich through being notaries, and purchasing estates: in fact they possessed 10.44 per cent of the total landed properties placed in the vicariate of Camaiore in the sixteenth century. The Orsuccis political ascent culminated at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in 1508, when the notary *ser* Bernardino was admitted to the *Consiglio Generale* (General Council) of Lucca, and then when Andrea Orsucci became an *Anziano* (a member of the highest republican body) in 1532. The Orsuccis also controlled religious life in Camaiore. Many of them became priors of the Collegiata Church of Santa Maria Assunta, where they had rights of patronage over five chapels. Finally, with a bull of 1537, Pope Paul III granted Cristoforo Orsucci the privilege of bearing the mitre, ring, pastoral staff and the others pontifical insignia.[69]

The Orsuccis' first place in Camaiore was clear, but it is more difficult to measure the social prestige of other members of local elites. In fact, many of them certainly had important social roles which were obvious at the time but are unclear today. Many of them were mediators between Lucca and their community.

68 Braddick, *State Formation*, p. 189.

69 About Orsuccis, see Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti*, pp. 117, 325; and Santini, "L'ascesa politica", 79-109.

The Borgo a Mozzano company was led by captain Leonardo Crestoni, who had a workshop with a small landholding, and he appeared in the council meetings only twice (1574, 1577). But he received important assignments in his commune: for example, in 1576 he was selected to remake the council's '*borsa* (bag)', that is to choose the names of those who could be drawn from it and become council members. Captain Crestoni was often a mediator between Borgo a Mozzano and Lucca. In 1573, he went to Lucca to buy 50 sacks of chestnut flour and the following year he was again in the city to negotiate payment of the debts incurred by the Guinigis in his commune, where that family had many estates.[70]

Michelangelo Santucci was the captain of Camaiore's militia company. He had no properties, but he frequently had a seat in the council. Michelangelo, like Leonardo Crestoni, would seem to have had a low profile, but his father was Porfidio Santucci, one of the richest and most influential personalities in Camaiore. In 1564, Michelangelo helped Camaiore's *commissario* to search for effective remedies against the plague, and the following year he was sent to the Bishop of Lucca, Alessandro I Guidiccioni, to negotiate an agreement on tithes which had not been paid.[71]

Fabio Bertolucci was the corporal of Montignoso's second squad. He was probably very rich and influential. In 1590, he was awarded the contract to levy the tax on grain exported from the vicariate for *circa* 366 *lire*. In the council meetings during decade analysed (1591-1600), corporal Bertolucci was given a seat seven times and he was one of the most frequently selected. He was also given important responsibilities: for example he was sent to the Bishop of Luni in 1591 to ask him to send two priests to Montignoso. Unfortunately, Fabio was not a member of an established family and he did not have many relatives. So, probably the rank of corporal was the highest he could aspire to.[72]

As we can see from the muster lists, many militia squads were composed of members of the same family. This characteristic was rooted principally in military considerations. According to Parker, in European professional armies in the modern period, to increase the bonds between soldiers, colonels often "employed either kindred or neighbours as their captains and, at least until the 1740s, recruited their vassals".[73] To build these kind of bonds, the Republic of Lucca enlisted many relatives in the squads and in such cases the families could control the militia directly. For example, 8 out of 24 arquebusiers of the

70 ASCBM, *Borgo deliberazioni*, vol. 51, fols. 200*v*, 202*r*, 204*v*, 213*r*; ibid., *Estimo*, vol. 164, fol. 159*v*.

71 ASCC, *Deliberazioni*, vol. 126, fols. 232*r*, 242*r*, 265*r*; ibid., *Libro dell'estimo*, vol. 549, fol. 18*v*.

72 BCM, *Atti*, vol. 4, fols. 84*v*-85*r*; ibid., *Tasse*, vol. 38, fols. 213*r*, 227*v*.

73 Parker, *The Military Revolution*, p. 48.

third squad of Montignoso had a kinship relation with corporal Francesco Giorgini. Similarly, in Camaiore the command of the *sesto* San Pietro and *sesto* San Michele squads was given, respectively, to Pochello Bonuccelli and Antonio Lorensi. In the first case 9 squad members out of 44 were Pochello Bonuccelli's relatives, while in the second case 7 out of 19 were related to Antonio Lorensi. Finally, in the Borgo a Mozzano squad, 11 soldiers out of 73 were Marianis.[74]

In case of conflict, the militiamen sent into battle tended to be the ones with the lowest social status, or else those who had received the most training. In any case, soldiers both experienced and inexperienced were more willing to follow someone they recognised as an authority. Mercenary units were formed of and led by people who actually had military experience and skills, but in the militia the leaders were those who led in the community. During the War of Massa (July-August 1538) fought between Lucca and Marchioness Ricciarda Malaspina, the Republic called up a Camaiore's militia squad. The commune of Camaiore sent a 20-men unit led by corporal Bastiano Boni, a member of the local elite who became militia captain in the following years.[75]

To conclude, in contrast to what appears from the historiography regarding other Italian states of the time, Lucca's *ordinanze* cadres in the sixteenth century were already composed of people or families who were preeminent in their communities. Certainly, militiamen often were in close relations of their leaders and, as in the confraternities, "membership provided opportunities for role playing, networking, influencing people and activities".[76] Probably, the common bond of membership in the militia could create links between soldiers and allow for new family alliances through marriages, which were "la clef de voûte de toutes les coalitions et de toutes les constructions politiques".[77] In Camaiore, the militia captain Piero Rossi, corporal Bartolomeo Rossi's grandson, in 1609 married Angela, who was Michelangelo Santucci's granddaughter.[78] Certainly, being captain of the militia was an honorific title, but both were members of important Camaiore families and they married to strengthen their power base. But it is important to underline that these relationships already existed. Many militia officers already had an important role in connecting Lucca with their own community. As we have seen, they were often sent to

74 ASL, *Milizie della Campagna*, vol. 35, 1560, fols. 1*r*-2*r*, 6*r*; ibid., vol. 36, 1577, fols. 146*r*-148*r*; ibid., vol. 37, 1590, fol. 305*v*.

75 ASL, *Offizio sopra le differenze dei Confini*, vol. 6, fol. 11*r*. On the war of Massa, see Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti*, pp. 165-7; Sforza, *Memorie storiche*, pp. 49-52. For example, in the period 1555-64, Boni had a seat in Camaiore's council seven times. ASCC, *Deliberazioni*, vol. 125, fol. 283*v*; ibid., vol. 126, fols. 22*v*, 93*v*, 99*r*, 134*r*, 167*r*, 199*v*.

76 Black, *Church, Religion and Society*, p. 137.

77 Delille, *Le maire et le prieur*, p. 253. Quote translation: "the keystone of all coalitions and all political constructions".

78 ASPAC, *Matrimoni*, vol. 1, fol. 208*r*.

Lucca to negotiate with members of the Lucchese oligarchy because they were eminent members of the local elites.

This kind of military organisation founded on subjects was very typical for Tuscany. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Pezzolo judges that there were 200-250,000 militiamen in Italy and, in the same period, 50-60,000 of those were in Tuscan states of the Medici dominions, the Republic of Lucca, and the Cybo-Malaspina states of Massa and Carrara.[79] In the Republic of Lucca the inhabitants were enlisted in a ratio of about 1 out of 5 adult men or even more, as in the vicariate of Montignoso where about half the adult men were enlisted. It would seem necessary to question the idea that militiamen formed a separate class, at least in small states where local elites controlled these institutions, and where their military relevance was indeed crucial. This was even more true in Massa and Carrara states where almost all the adult men were enlisted in the *ordinanze*.[80]

Italian militias were reordered during the sixteenth century for military purposes and the governments had to be sure of inhabitants' loyalty if they were to allow them to bear weapons. In monarchical states, governments had to reach a compromise with the provincial nobility in order to establish militias. In the same period, the Republic of Lucca had no nobles in its territories, whereas it had many fairly autonomous subjects who enjoyed power and prestige in the outlying communities. If the merchant oligarchy wished to create *ordinanze*, it had to mediate with these local elites. The militia institution benefitted everybody. On the one hand, Lucca was interested in maintaining the *status quo* in the communities. By ensuring that the *ordinanze*'s leaders were themselves, or were connected with, those in power at the local level, the Lucchese could depend on them, trusting them to carry out their military service loyally during war because they were also interested in defending their own homelands. But on the other hand, the families who were preeminent in their communes were also happy to become militia officers. In the military hierarchy they found yet another way to wield control over their communities and to guarantee that their power would continue.

Obviously, there were many differences between the single cases we have considered. These were produced by various historical, political, social and economic factors. But in each case the result was the same: the local elite controlled militia officers' cadres, because that was an aspect and an expression of

79 Angiolini, "Le Bande medicee", pp. 17-8. Pezzolo, "Le 'arme proprie' in Italia", p. 56.

80 Boghini, "Armi e forze armate", pp. 53-4: for this reason, Marquis Alberico I Cybo-Malaspina could only exempt officers and pikemen from the *testatico* tax, while arquebusiers paid half the normal amount.

their local power. The families who controlled the cadres during the sixteenth century were the same ones we find in the following century. In 1647, for example, Borgo a Mozzano's militia officers were Paolino Pellegrini, the highest taxpayer of the commune, as well as being the militia chancellor; Alessandro Mariani the sergeant, and Antonio Ricci and Luca Bendinelli the corporals were also from important families.[81] The militias were born with military purposes, but became soon another way for the local elites to consolidate their preeminence, mirroring the internal power structure of the communities.

Appendix

Tables[82]

TABLE 17.2 *Borgo a Mozzano: militia officers.* SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 36, 1577, FOLS. 146*R*-148*R*; ASCBM, *BORGO DELIBERAZIONI*, VOL. 51, FOLS. 188*R*-226*V*; IBID., ESTIMO DEL BORGO, VOL. 164.

Name	Military rank	Political involvement	Taxation
Alessando (son of) Agostino	drummer	–	–
Anchiano (from) Piero	drummer	–	–
Bendinelli Antonio	corporal	2	–
Cesare (son of) Alessandro	drummer	–	–
Corsagna (from) Marco	drummer	–	–
Crestoni Leonardo	captain	2	*l.* 1 *s.* 1 *d.* 1
Fornori (from) Vincenzo	sergeant	–	–
Ricci Francesco	lieutenant	6	*l.* 2 *s.* 1 *d.* 4
Vannini Jacopo	ensign	–	–

81 ASL, *Milizie della Campagna*, vol. 47, fols. 404*r*, 408*r*, 409*r*.

82 Abbreviations: *lire* = *l.*; *soldi* = *s.*; *denari* = *d.*; 1 *lira* = 20 *soldi*; 1 *soldo* = 12 *denari*.

TABLE 17.3 *Camaiore: militia officers.* SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 35, 1560, FOLS. 1*V*-6*V*; ASCC, *DELIBERAZIONI*, VOL. 125, FOLS. 239*V*-284*V*; IBID., VOL. 126, FOLS. 2*R*-284*V*; IBID., *LIBRO DELL'ESTIMO*, VOL. 549.

Name	Military rank	Political involvement	Taxation
Antonio Giovanni (son of) Giuseppe	drummer	–	–
Bigongiari Bartolomeo	corporal	7	*l.* 9 *s.* 6 *d.* 8
Bonuccelli Pochello	corporal	9	*l.* 10 *s.* 16 *d.* 2
Carletti Giuseppe	corporal	5	–
Giannini Nicolao	lieutenant	–	*l.* 3 *s.* 13 *d.* 4
Guasparini Battista	drummer	2	*l.* 8 *s.* 5 *d.* 4
Lemmetti Nicolao	corporal	10	*l.* 7 *s.* 3 *d.* 4
Lorensi Antonio	corporal	1	–
Manfredi Jacopo	ensign	11	*l.* 9 *s.* 11
Orsucci Giuseppe	sergeant	3	–
Orsucci Marco	sergeant major	8	*l.* 12 *s.* 18 *d.* 8
Paganini Nicolao	chancellor	9	*l.* 4 *s.* 1 *d.* 8
Rossi Bartolomeo	corporal	6	*l.* 11 *s.* 13 *d.* 2
Santucci Michelangelo	captain	8	–

TABLE 17.4 *Montignoso: militia officers.* SOURCES: ASL, *MILIZIE DELLA CAMPAGNA*, VOL. 37, 1590, FOLS. 303*R*-310*V*; BCM, *ATTI*, VOL. 4, FOLS. 41*V*-268*R*; IBID., VOL. 5, FOLS. 2*R*-134*R*; IBID., *TASSE*, VOL. 38, FOLS. 204*R*-213*V*, 217*R*-228*V*.

Name	Military rank	Political involvement	Taxation
Bertagnini Bartolomeo	chancellor	1	*l.* 23 *s.* 4 *d.* 10
Bertocchi Girolamo	corporal	3	–
Bertolucci Fabio	corporal	7	*l.* 382 *s.* 4 *d.* 6
Buonuomo Francesco	corporal	–	–
Galeotti Carlo	ensign	1	*l.* 8 *s.* 4
Galeotti Pellegrino	drummer	–	*l.* 4 *s.* 6 *d.* 10
Giorgini Francesco	corporal	3	*l.* 15 *s.* 10 *d.* 6
Marchini Mario	corporal	–	–
Mazzei Piero	sergeant	5	*l.* 23 *s.* 3 *d.* 4

Name	Military rank	Political involvement	Taxation
Moro Nicolao	corporal	–	*l.* 6 *s.* 16 *d.* 6
Orlandi Giovanni Battista	corporal	4	–
Papa Matteo	drummer	–	*l.* 17 *s.* 13
Poggio (from) Piero	corporal	5	*l.* 19
Ricci Lorenzo	drummer	2	*l.* 1 *s.* 13
Varesi Vincenzo	lieutenant	1	*l.* 16 *s.*7 *d.* 6

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CHAPTER 18

Commanders of the Janissary Army: The Janissary Ağas, Their Career and Promotion Patterns

Aysel Yıldız

> Should a man of our corps, who serves as sekbanbaşı [deputy of the janissary agha] and kul kethüdâsı [deputy commander], pass away before raising to the rank of janissary agha, he is then considered to die without faith.[1]

Introduction

In an imperial council dated 8 B 921/18 August 1515, something notable occurred. Dignitaries of different ranks were in attendance, including Zeyrekzâde, the *kazasker* (chief judge) of Rumelia, and Tâcîzâde Cafer Çelebi, the *kazasker* of Anatolia. Both entered the presence of the sultan, and then returned home. After a while the *sekbanbaşı*, the deputy to the janisssary ağa, Balyemez Osman Ağa, was called into the presence of the sultan. He went inside accompanied with other dignitaries. Then a *kapıcıbaşı* (head gate keeper) arrived, bound the hands of vizier Piri Paşa and vizier İskender Paşa from behind, and took them to the sultan. Another official also brought Cafer Çelebi from his home. An executioner first executed İskender Paşa, then Cafer Çelebi, and finally Osman Ağa, while the sultan watched. Following this execution, miralem Yakub Ağa was appointed as the new janissary ağa.[2]

This council was called by order of Selim I (r. 1512-1520) after his return from the eastern campaign against the Safavids. According to historiographical tradition, the execution of Balyemez Osman Ağa and the appointment of Yakub

1 "Bir âdem bizim ocağımızda segbanbaşı ve kul kethüdâsı olup da yeniçeri ağası olmazdan mukaddem vefât ederse îmânsız ölmüş olur." Abdülkadir Özcan (ed.) *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi (1099-1116/1688-1704)*, Ankara 2000), p. 228. This is a comment by Haşimoğlu Murtaza Ağa, a former *kul kethüda* and later a *sekbanbaşı* (28 C 1103/17 March 1692-2 B 1104/9 March 1693).

2 Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri*, 9 vols, Istanbul 1996, IX, p. 377.

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Ağa – mark a historic change in the non-commissioned ranks of the janissary troops. From then on, janissary ağas would be the highest commanders of the janissary army, rather than the *sekbanbaşı*.[3]

This paper is a prosopographic study of an elite military group, the commanders of the famous janissary army. It surveys an aspect of the command structure of the janissary army, focusing on the evolution in the nature of the career and promotion patterns of the janissary ağas, from the establishment of the army until the corps was abolished by Mahmud II in 1826. Given the limitations of the data, this paper should be considered as offering tentative results from preliminary research on the status, career and promotion patterns of this important military elite. Yet it hopes to contribute to a better understanding this element of the Ottoman military establishment, illuminating the internal system of authority of the janissary army as well as its role in the socio-political life of the Ottoman Empire. Such a study is crucial not only to understanding the long history of the janissary system, but may also help us to better understand Ottoman political structures. The relation between the imperial court, the Porte (*Bab-ı Ali*), and the janissary corps was subject to changes and adjustments, which are also reflected in the recruitment strategies concerning the janissary ağas. The gradual changes in the recruitment patterns of this elite group also reflect the gradual transformations taking place in the socio-political and administrative structure of the empire.

Very limited reliable data is available on the numbers and identities of the non-commissioned ranks of the janissary army, and the exact promotion and dismissal dates of the janissary officers are not well recorded. The basic problem seems to be a lack of systematic official record keeping, at least for certain periods. One therefore has to consult the contemporary narratives, which are not always careful in the dates they provide, and in some cases are clearly inconsistent. There are some incomplete lists in the contemporary or later sources, and it is sometimes possible to find short lists of janissary ağas for certain periods.[4] As may be observed in Table 18.1, I have endeavoured to make

3 Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, IX, p. 377. See also İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapukulu Ocakları I: Acemi Ocağı ve Yeniçeri Ocağı*, Ankara 1998, p. 169.

4 One of the earliest is the list of the janissary ağas from 927/1520-21 to 1109/1698, containing the listed 129 janissary ağas. This was published by Akgündüz in his *Kanunnameler*, IX, pp. 378-381. This list contains very brief entries, essentially comprising the names and years of appointment of the ağas. Sometimes the ağa's former post is provided (such as mirialem Ahmed Ağa or kapıcıaşı Cafer Ağa); sometimes only their names are given (Halil Ağa, Hızır Ağa). Brief notes on their achievements (İbrahim Ağa, "fatih-i" (conqueror) Kıbrıs), subsequent posts, or deaths, are sometimes noted. In the list, 24 commanders are mentioned as being recruited from the janissary army. Another list of the janissary ağas is provided in Mehmed Süreyya,

a complete list of the janissary ağas insofar as the available data permits. My own list consists of 295 ağas (from 1515 to 1826), including repeated promotions. The list gives not only their names, but the exact dates of appointment and dismissal, former and subsequent appointments, as well as the highest positions the janissary ağas reached.[5]

The available data, based on long research, make possible a rough periodization in terms of the career and promotion patterns of the janissary ağas. The first period (1515-1612) can be described as a period in which the janissary ağas were more dependent on the person of the sultan and were recruited from the imperial household, with correspondingly greater chances of reaching higher positions. The second period (1613-1704), roughly covering the seventeenth century, shares the general characteristics of this century: it was a transitional period when the appointment of the ağas from the corps gradually began to be established, yet their chances of achieving higher positions became slimmer and their careers and image began to suffer from the general disturbances that characterized that century. The third and final period (1705-1826) signifies the firm establishment of the patterns of the previous period, such as the professionalization and institutionalization of the rank-and-file of the janissary corps, which at the same time made the janissary ağas an almost marginal group within the Ottoman political apparatus.

Sicill-i Osmanî: Osmanlı Ünlüleri, ed. Seyit Ali Kahraman, 6 vols., Istanbul 1996, VI, pp. 1764-69. The list begins in 922/1516 with the appointment of Ferhad Ağa and ends with Mehmed Celaleddin Ağa, the last ağa before the abolition of the corps in 1826. The author usually provides only the years of promotion and dismissal, though sometimes months are also mentioned. It contains very brief entries on the former career and later promotions. His list includes the names of 271 janissary ağas, including repeated promotions of same person to commandership of janissary army. Unfortunately he does not state his sources. Another full list is provided by Yılmaz Öztuna in his *Devletler ve Hanedanlar: Türkiye* (*1074-1990*), 5 vols, Ankara 1969, II, pp. 980-84. Similar to Mehmed Süreyya, his list begins with Ferhad Ağa (1515-16) and the names of 281 janissary ağas are enumerated, sometimes including brief notes on their former and subsequent appointments. Occasionally full dates of promotions are provided, without mentioning the sources, but usually the year or month is provided. The differences are not due to ignorance on the part of these historians but rather to conflicts in the data.

5 Due to a lack of reliable data from the period, as well as the fact that the janissary ağas were not the highest commanders of the janissary army, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are not included. To avoid mistakes, I preferred to rely primarily on archival evidence, supplemented by reliable contemporary sources. As already evident from the list, there are some gaps for certain periods, especially for the sixteenth and early sevententh century, and the eighteenth century. I hope these gaps will be filled by future studies.

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)*

Name	Career	Former duty	Date of appointment	Date of dismissal	Next post	Highest post
YAKUB AĞA	imperial household	silahdar, miralem	8 B 921/ 18 August 1515	?	?	?
FERHAD AĞA	imperial household	?	921/ 1515	922/ 1516	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia, vizier
AYAS MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	servant of Selim I	923/ 1517	6 M 925/ 8 January 1519?	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 15.3.1536-13.7.1539
KEMAL/KEMALEDDİN AĞA	imperial household	commander of Yedi kule fortress	6 M 925/ 8 January 1519	925/ 1519	died	janissary ağa
BEHRAM AĞA	imperial household	?	N 925/ August 1519	926/ 1520	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
BALİ AĞA	imperial household	?	927/ 1521	929/ 1523	executed	janissary ağa
MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	odabaşı, mirahor	929/ 1523?	27 C 931/ 21 April 1525	executed	janissary ağa
ŞÜCAADDİN AĞA	Military	azablar ağası	27 C 931/ 21 April 1525	28 Z 932/ 5 October 1526	died	janissary ağa
MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	çaşnigirbaşı, kapıcıbaşı	28 Z 932/ 5 October 1526	932/ 1526?	beylerbey	beylerbey
İSMAİL AĞA	imperial household	Miralem	932/ 1526?	N 937/ April-May 1531	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
GÜZELCE RÜSTEM AĞA	imperial household	silahdar, mirahor	N 937/ April-May 1531	940/ 1533-34	beylerbey of Budin	beylerbey of Budin

SİLAHDAR CAFER AĞA	imperial household	Silahdar	940/ 1533-34	941/ 1534	beylerbey of Damascus	beylerbey of Baghdad
MEHMED AĞA	?	?	941/ 1534	3 C 941/ 10 December 1534	beylerbey of Aleppo	beylerbey of Aleppo
KARA AHMED AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı, miralem	3 C 941/ 10 December 1534	948/1541	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 6.10.1553-29.9.1555
TEMERRÜD ALİ AĞA	imperial household	Mirahor	14 M 948/ 10 May 1541	947/ 1540-41	beylerbey of Erzurum	beylerbey of Anatolia
FERHAD AĞA	?	korucubaşı ?	948/ 1541	953/ 1546-47	?	?
SEMİZ KALIN ALİ AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı, miralem	953/ 1546-7	11 S 956/ 11 March 1549	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 10.7.1561-28.6.1565
SİNAN AĞA	imperial household	Miralem	11 S 956/ 11 March 1549	960/ 1553	?	?
İSKENDER AĞA	imperial household	Bostancıbaşı	960/ 1553?	961/ 1554 ?	beylerbey of Egypt?	vizier, beylerbey
PERTEV MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	Kapıcıbaşı	961/ 1554?	25 L 961/ 23 September 1554		
DAMAD FERHAD AĞA	imperial household	Kapıcıbaşı	25 L 961/ 23 September 1554	20 Ra 965/ 10 January 1558	beylerbey of Kastamonu	vizier
SEMİZ AHMED AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	20 Ra 965/ 10 January 1558	24 M 969/ 4 October 1561	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 12.10.1579-28.4.1580
HASAN AĞA	imperial household	Kapıcıbaşı	24 M 969/ 4 October 1561	13 Za 970/ 4 July 1563	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
MÜEZZİNZÂDE ALİ AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı, çaşnigir, mirahor	13 Za 970/ 4 July 1563	15 C 974/ 28 December 1566	grand admiral	grand admiral

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

CAFER AĞA	imperial household	silahdar, kapıcıbaşı	15 C 974/ 28 December 1566	B 977/ December 1569	governor of Kütahya	vizier, janissary ağa
SİYAVUŞ AĞA	imperial household	mirahor -ı kebir, kapıcıbaşı	B 977/ December 1569	978/ 1570	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 24.12.1582-28.7.1584; 15.4.1586-2.4.1589; 4.4.1592-28.1.1593
ÇERKES MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	servant in enderun	978/ 1570	983/ 1575	died	janissary ağa
CAĞALOĞLU SİNAN AĞA	imperial household	silahdar, kapıcıbaşı	983/ 1575	987/ 1579	governor of Erzurum	grand vizier: 27.10.1596-5.12.1596
CERRAH MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	hasoda cerrahlık, mirahor-ı kebir	987/ 1579	29 L 987/ 19 December 1579	vizier, beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 9.4.1598-6.1.1599
SİLAHDAR DAMAD İBRAHİM AĞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı kebir, silahdar	29 L 987/ 19 December 1579	2 S 990/ 26 February 1582	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 4.4.1596-27.10.1596; 5.12.1596-3.11.1597; 6.1.1599-10.7.1601
FERHAD AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı, mirahor-ı evvel	2 S 990/ 26 February 1582	3 Z 990/ 29 December 1582	beylerbey of Rumelia, vizier	grand vizier: 1.8.1591-4.4.1592; 7.7.1595-19.11.1595
PAYZEN FRENK YUSUF AĞA	imperial household	Miralem	3 Z 990/ 29 December 1582?	992/ 1584	beylerbey of Budin	beylerbey of Budin
MEHMED AĞA	?	?	992/ 1584	10 L 992/ 15 October 1584	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia

AYAS PAŞAZÂDE MUSTAFA AĞA	?	?	993/ 1585	993/ 1585	beylerbey of Maraş	beylerbey of Damascus
MARAŞLI KARA MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	doğancıbaşı, çakırcıbaşı, mirahor	993/ 1585	993/ 1585?	beylerbey of Rumelia, vizier	beylerbey of Rumelia, vizier
HÜRREM AĞA	?	?	993/ 1585?	995/ 1587	?	?
HALİL AĞA	imperial household	Silahdar	995/ 1587	Evail-i Ş 996/ 25 June-5 July 1588	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia?
HALİL AĞA	imperial household	silahdar, kapıcıbaşı	Evail-i Ş 996/ 25 June-5 July 1588	997/ 1589	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
HIZIR AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	997/ 1589	24 C 997/ 10 May 1589	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
APOSTOL MAHMUD AĞA	imperial household	Miralem	24 C 997/ 10 May 1589	998/ 1590	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
SAATÇİ HASAN AĞA	imperial household	silahdar, miralem	998/ 1590	29 R 999/ 24 February 1591	beylerbey, kaim-makam	beylerbey and kaimmakam
SATIRCI MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	miralem, mirahor-ı kebir	29 R 999/ 24 February 1591	21 C 1000/ 4 April 1592	beylerbey of Karaman	grand vizier: 26.7.1604-21.6.1606
BOSNALI HALİL AĞA (*VASİLİKİ*)	imperial household	Silahdar	21 C 1000/ 4 April 1592	6 L 1000/ 16 July 1592		
MAHMUD AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	6 L 1000/ 16 July 1592	1 Za 1002/ 19 July 1594	?	?
YEMİŞÇİ HASAN AĞA	imperial household	çaşnigir, kapıcıbaşı	1 Za 1002/ 19 July 1594	16 B 1003/ 27 March 1595	vizier, beylerbey of Şirvan	vizier, beylerbey of Şirvan

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

HARAMİ/HIRAMİ AHMED AĞA	?	?	16 B 1003/ 27 March 1595	Evail-i L 1003/ 28 June-7 July 1595	beylerbey of Bosnia	beylerbey of Bosnia
GÜZELCE MAHMUD AĞA	imperial household	servant in enderun	Evail-i L 1003/ 28 June-7 July 1595	1003/ 1595	beylerbey of Kars, kaimmakam	beylerbey and kaimmakam
YEMİŞÇİ HASAN PAŞA	imperial household	ex-janissary ağa, beylerbey	1003/ 1595	4 C 1004/ 4 February 1596	commander of Revan	grand vizier: 10.7.1601-16.10.1603
VELİ AĞA	imperial household	mirahor, kapıcıbaşı	4 C 1004/ 4 February 1596	18 S 1005/ 11 October 1596	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
SARIKÇI MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	18 S 1005/ 11 October 1596	5 Ra 1005/ 27 October 1596	beylerbey of Van	vizier, beylerbey and kaimmakam
TIRNAKÇI HASAN AĞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı evvel	5 Ra 1005/ 27 October 1596	Ş 1009/ February-March 1601	governor of Baghdad, vizier	vizier, beylerbey
ALİ AĞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı evvel	Ş 1009/ February-March 1601	20 B 1011/ 3 January 1603	dismissed	janissary ağa?
DELİ FERHAD AĞA	imperial household	bostancıbaşı	20 B 1011/ 3 January 1603	1 Za 1011/ 12 April 1603	beylerbey of Damascus	beylerbey of Rumelia, vizier
KASIM AĞA	imperial household	kapıcılar kethüda, mirahor-ı evvel	1 Za 1011/ 12 April 1603	29 R 1012/ 6 October 1603	vizier, kaimmakam	kaimmakam and vizier
TÜRK KOCA AHMED AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı, mirahor-ı evvel, kapıcıbaşı	29 R 1012/ 6 October 1603	6 Za 1012/ 6 April 1604	grand admiral	grand admiral

NAKKAŞ HASAN AĞA	imperial household	anahtar oğlanı, dülbend gulamı, silahdar, kapıcıbaşılıkla taşra	6 Za 1012/ 6 April 1604	25 B 1013/ 17 December 1604	vizier, beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey and kaimmakam
SİLAHDAR HÜSEYİN AĞA	imperial household	silahdar	25 B 1013/ 17 December 1604	7 Za 1014/ 16 March 1606	beylerbey of Aleppo	beylerbey of Aleppo
MARYOL HÜSEYİN AĞA	imperial household	mirahor	7 Za 1014/ 16 March 1606	7 Ra 1016/ 2 July 1607	beylerbey of Anatolia, later Rumelia	beylerbey
MARAŞLI/KAYSERİLİ HALİL AĞA	imperial household	çakırcıbaşı, silahdar?	7 Ra 1016/ 2 July 1607	11 Za 1017/ 16 February 1609	grand admiral	grand vizier: 17.11.1616-18.1.1619
TOPHANELİ SİPAHİZADE MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	silahdar	11 Za 1017/ 16 February 1609	25 C 1020/ 4 September 1611	beylerbey of Egypt	beylerbey of Egypt?
İMRAHOR İBRAHİM AĞA	imperial household	çakırcıbaşı?, mirahor	25 C 1020/ 4 September 1611?	28 Ş 1021/ 24 October 1612	beylerbey of Yemen	beylerbey of Yemen?
MİRALEM İSMAİL AĞA	imperial household	miralem	28 Ş 1021/ 24 October 1612	10 M 1022/ 2 March 1613?	dismissed	janissary ağa
ÇUKADAR AHMED AĞA	imperial household	çukadar	10 M 1022/ 2 March 1613	1 Ca 1022/ 19 June 1613	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia
MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	1 Ca 1022/ 19 June 1613	23 Ş 1022/ 8 October 1613	beylerbey of Egypt	beylerbey of Egypt?
AHMED AĞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı evvel	23 Ş 1022/ 8 October 1613	24 M 1024/ 23 February 1615		
MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı evvel	26 M 1024/ 23 February 1615	29 N 1025/ 10 October 1616	died	janissary ağa

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

SARI HÜSEYİN AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	29 N 1025/ 10 October 1616	1025/ 1616	beylerbey of Damascus	beylerbey of Damascus
OHRİLİ HÜSEYİN AĞA	imperial household	bostancıbaşı	1025/ 1616	1025/ 1616	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 9.3.1621-17.9.1621
NİŞANCI AHMED AĞA	bureaucracy and imperial household	scribe to janissary army, defterdar, mirahor	1025/ 1616	L 1025/ October-November 1616	beylerbey of Egypt	beylerbey and nişancı
ALİ AĞA	?	?	L 1025/ October/November 1616	1025/ 1616	beylerbey of Bosnia	beylerbey of Bosnia
HOCAZADE DAMADI MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı, sipahiler ağası	R 1027/ March-April 1618	1027/ 1618	beylerbey of Diyarbakır	beylerbey of Diyarbakır
MİRAHOR ISPARTALI MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı, mirahor	1028/ 1618	1028/ 1619	beylerbey of Egypt	beylerbey and nişancı
BİBERHASMI SİLAHDAR YUSUF AĞA	imperial household	silahdar	Za 1028/ October-November 1619	M 1030/ November- December 1620	governor of Aleppo	beylerbey
NİĞDELİ SOFTA MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	çaşnigir	M 1030/ 26 November-25 December 1620	27 L 1030/ 14 September 1621	grand admiral	grand admiral
DEVECİ ALİ AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	27 L 1030/ 14 September 1621	8 B 1031/ 19 May 1622	?	?
KARA ALİ AĞA	military and imperial household	çavuş, kul kethüda, kapıcıbaşı	8 B 1031/ 19 May 1622	29 Ş 1031/ 9 July 1622	murdered by Janissaries	janissary ağa

DELİ DERVİŞ AĞA	imperial household	silahdar	29 Ş 1031/ 9 July 1622	8 Z 1031/ 14 October 1622	beylerbey of Rumelia	beylerbey of Rumelia?
BERBER KARA MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	barber, mirahor	8 Z 1031/ 14 October 1622	M 1032/ November-December 1622	beylerbey of Egypt, vizier	beylerbey
ÇEŞTECİ ALİ AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	M 1032/ November-December 1622	10 Z 1032/ 5 October 1623	beylerbey of Egypt	vizier and beylerbey
BAYRAM ÇELEBİ AĞA	military	sakabaşı, odabaşı, turnacı, zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	10 Z 1032/ 5 October 1623	M 1033/ October- November 1623	vizier, beylerbey of Egypt	grand vizier: 2.2.1637-26.8.1638
HÜSREV AĞA	imperial household	çukadar, silahdar	M 1033/ October-November 1623	1036/ 1626	beylerbey of Diyarbakır, vizier	grand vizier: 6.4.1628-25.10.1631
ALİ AĞA	military	çavuşbaşı	12 Ra 1036/ 1 December 1626	20 L 1036/ 4 July 1627	died in Aleppo	janissary ağa
DEMİRKAZIK HALİL AĞA	imperial household	servant of darüssade ağa, then sipahiler ağası	20 L 1036/ 4 July 1627	16 R 1038/ 13 December 1628	governor of Sivas	beylerbey
MOSTARLI MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	doğancıbaşı	16 R 1038/ 13 December 1628	16 M 1040/ 25 August 1630	beylerbey of Damascus	beylerbey
HACI EYVAD SÜLEYMAN AĞA	Steward	steward	16 M 1040/ 25 August 1630	29 Ra 1041/ 25 October 1631	governor of Erzurum, vizier	vizier, beylerbey
HASAN HALİFE AĞA	imperial household	mirahor?	29 Ra 1041/ 25 October 1631	20 Z 1041/ 8 July 1632	murdered	janissary ağa
KÖSE MEHMED AĞA	Military	kul kethüda	20 Z 1041/ 8 July 1632	21 N 1043/ 21 March 1634	executed	janissary ağa

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

MEHMED AĞA	Military	sipahi ağası	21 N 1043/ 21 March 1634	4 L 1044/ 23 March 1635	governor of Karaman	governor of Karaman?
KEMANKEŞ KARA MUSTAFA AĞA	Military	solak, kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	4 L 1044/ 23 March 1635	9 C 1045/ 20 November 1635	grand admiral	grand vizier: 23.12.1638-31.1.1644
ŞAHİN AĞA	imperial household and bureaucracy	defterdar, mirahor	9 C 1045/ 20 November 1635	2 L 1047/ 17 February 1638	defterdar	defterdar?
KÜÇÜK HASAN AĞA	Military	ex- kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	2 L 1047/ 17 February 1638	24 Ş 1048/ 31 December 1638	governor of Baghdad	beylerbey of Rumelia
RİKABDAR BIYIKLI MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	rikabdar, silahdar	24 Ş 1048/ 31 December 1638	Za 1049/ February-March 1640	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand admiral
SİLAHDAR SİYAVUŞ AĞA	imperial household	çukadar?, silahdar	Za 1049/ February-March 1640	22 C 1050/ 9 October 1640	grand admiral	grand vizier: 21.8.1651-27.9.1651; 5.3.1656-26.4.1656
TEKELİ/ANTALYALI MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	mirahor	22 C 1050/ 9 October 1640?	20 Za 1051/ 20 February 1642	governor of Erzurum	beylerbey of Rumelia
BEKTAŞ AĞA	Military	odabaşı, çorbacı, kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	20 Za 1051/ 20 February 1642	11 R 1053/ 29 June 1643	governor of Bursa	janissary ağa
HEZARGRADİ VOYNUK AHMED AĞA	imperial household	bostancıbaşı	11 R 1053/ 29 June 1643	10 M 1054/ 19 March 1644	beylerbey of Bosnia	grand admiral

MİRAHOR SALİH AĞA	imperial household and bureaucracy	tersane ve defter emaneti, mirahor	10 M 1054/ 19 March 1644	4 R 1054/ 10 June 1644	vizier, başdefterdar	grand vizier: 17.12.1645-16.9.1647
RİKABDAR ŞABAN AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	rikabdar	4 R 1054/ 10 June 1644	R 1055/ June 1645	beylerbey of Maraş,	beylerbey
MUSA AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	R 1055/ June 1645	17 L 1055/ 6 December 1645	baş defterdar, grand admiral	grand vizier: 16.9.1647-21.9.1647
PİRİNÇCİZADE AHMED AĞA PAŞA	Military	sipahiler ağası	17 L 1055/ 6 December 1645	11 S 1056/ 29 March 1646	governor of Biga, defterdar ?	janissary ağa
DEBBAĞ MEHMED AĞA	Military	sipahiler kethüdası	11 S 1056/ 29 March 1646	28 Za 1056/ 5 January 1647	beylerbey of Aleppo	beylerbey
HAMAMCI MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı evvel	28 Za 1056/ 5 January 1647	23 Ra 1057/ 28 April 1647	vizier	vizier
HAMZAPAŞAZADE MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	Military	sipahiler ağası	23 Ra 1057/ 28 April 1647	10 B 1057/ 11 August 1647	vizier	vizier
SEYYİD EMİR MEHMED EFENDİ	bureaucracy	küçük defterdar, şıkk-ı sani defterdarı	10 B 1057/ 11 August 1647	24 L 1057/ 22 November 1647	beylerbey of Egypt	beylerbey and defterdar
KÜÇÜK ÇAVUŞ AHMED AĞA	Military	çavuş, silahdar ağası	24 L 1057/ 22 November 1647	8 S 1058/ 4 March 1648	banished to Kütahya	beylerbey of Anatolia
BOSTANCIBAŞI CEZAYİRLİ MUSA AĞA	imperial household	ex-bostancıbaşı	8 S 1058/ 4 March 1648	17 Ca 1058/ 9 June 1648	died	janissary ağa
EMİR SELECİ ŞERİF MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	silahdar	17 Ca 1058/ 9 June 1648	1 Ş 1058/ 21 August 1648	governor of Bolu, başdefterdar	baş defterdar, vizier
KARAGÖZ MEHMED AĞA	Steward	steward to Kara Mustafa Paşa	1 Ş 1058/ 21 August 1648	29 Z 1058/ 14 January 1649	governor of Egypt, defterdar	defterdar,beylerbey

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

KARA DEV MURAD AĞA	Military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda, ex-sekbanbaşı	29 Z 1058/ 14 January 1649	9 Ca 1059/ 21 May 1649	grand admiral	grand vizier: 21.5.1649-5.8.1650; 11.5.1655-19.8.1655
ŞAHİN AĞA	Military	başçavuş	9 Ca 1059/ 21 May 1649	16 N 1061/ 2 September 1651	executed	janissary ağa
KARAHASAN AĞAZADE HÜSEYİN AĞA	Military	ex-kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı sabık	16 N 1061/ 2 September 1651	15 Z 1061/ 29 November 1651	governor of Kastamonu	janissary ağa
MALATYALI RİKABDAR SÜLEYMAN AĞA	imperial household	dülbend ağa, silahdar, rikabdar	15 Z 1061/ 29 November 1651	1 R 1063/ 1 March 1653	governor of Malatya	grand vizier: 19.8.1655-28.2.1656
GÜRCÜ MUSTAFA AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	has odabaşı, dülbend gulamı	1 R 1063/ 1 March 1653	26 M 1064/ 17 December 1653	governor of Kanije	beylerbey of Egypt
GÜRCÜ SÜLEYMAN KENAN AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	silahdar	26 M 1064/ 17 December 1653	9 L 1065/ 12 August 1655	vizier, governor of Kanije	vizier
MİRAHOR MEHMED AĞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı evvel	9 L 1065/ 12 August 1655	7 C 1066/ 2 April 1656	dismissed	janissary ağa
ASES DAMADI MEHMED AĞA	Military	saksoncubaşı, kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	7 C 1066/ 2 April 1656	8 C 1066/ 3 April 1656	executed	janissary ağa
ÇUKADAR BOŞNAK MAHMUD AĞA	imperial household	çukadarı	8 C 1066/ 3 April 1656	12 Ş 1066/ 5 June 1656	executed	janissary ağa
ÇETREFİLZADE GÜRCÜ HÜSEYİN AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	çukadar, silahdar?	12 Ş 1066/ 5 June 1656	24 Za 1066/ 13 September 1656	vizier, beylerbey of Diyarbakır	beylerbey and vizier
SÜHRAP MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	has oda, mirahor-ı evvel	24 Za 1066/ 13 September 1656	1 N 1067/ 13 June 1657	vizier, governor of Sivas	vizier

HOCA ALİ AĞA	imperial household	kapıcıbaşı	1 N 1067/ 13 June 1657	9 C 1068/ 14 March 1658	executed	janissary ağa
KUNDAKÇIZADE KANBUR MUSTAFA AĞA	Military	çorbacı, Bağdad ağası, sekbanbaşı,	9 C 1068/ 14 March 1658	22 C 1072/ 12 February 1662	vizier, beylerbey of Damascus	beylerbey
SALİH AĞA	military and steward	çavuşbaşı, silahdar? steward to Köprülü family	22 C 1072/ 12 February 1662	4 C 1074/ 3 January1664	beylerbey of Damascus	beylerbey of Damascus
MUSTAFA AĞA	Military	kul kethüda	4 C 1074/ 3 January1664	6 M 1075/ 30 July 1664	died during the campaign	janissary ağa
MUHARREM AĞA	Steward	steward to Siyavuş Paşa	6 M 1075/ 30 July 1664	1 R 1075/ 22 October 1664	beylerbey of Anatolia	beylerbey of Anatolia
ÇAVUŞBAŞI ŞİŞMAN İBRAHİM AĞA	Military	çavuşbaşı	1 R 1075/ 22 October 1664	Za 1075/ May-June 1665	governor of Belgrade	beylerbey of Damascus
ARNAVUD UZUN İBRAHİM AĞA PAŞA	Military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	Za 1075/ May-June 1665	1 Z 1079/ 2 May 1669	kaimmakam	kaimmakam
ABDİ AĞA PAŞA	Military	kul kethüda	1 Z 1079/ 2 May 1669	1079/ 1669 ?	vizier	vizier?
ABDURRAHMAN AĞA PAŞA	Military	kul kethüda	1079/ 1669 ?	20 Ra 1085/ 24 June 1674	vizier, governer of Baghdad	beylerbey
KARA HASANZADE MUSTAFA AĞA	Military	kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	20 Ra 1085/ 24 June 1674	17 C 1089/ 6 August 1678	kaimmakam	kaimmakam
ÇELEBİ İBRAHİM AĞA PAŞA	Military	kul kethüda	17 C 1089/ 6 August 1678	12 C 1090/ 21 July 1679	vizier, governor of Erzurum	beylerbey and vizier
TEKFURDAĞLI BEKRİ MUSTAFA AĞA PAŞA	Military	ex-kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	12 C 1090/ 21 July 1679	1 M 1095/ 20 December 1683	vizier	grand vizier: 2.3.1688-25.10.1689

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

HACI ZÜLFİKAR AĞA PAŞA	Military	asesbaşı, kul kethüda, ex-sekbanbaşı	1 M 1095/ 20 December 1683	3 Ra 1097/ 28 January 1686	guardian of Sakız	vizier
ÇOLAK HASAN AĞA	Military	ex-kul kethüda	3 Ra 1097/ 28 January 1686	1 S 1098/ 17 December 1686	retired	janissary ağa
BEKRİ MUSTAFA AĞA PAŞA	Military	ex-janissary ağa	1 S 1098/ 17 December 1686	22 L 1098/ 31 August 1687	guardian of Boğazhisar	janissary ağa
CADI YUSUF AĞA	Military	zagarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	22 L 1098/ 31 August 1687	15 M 1099/ 21 November 1687	governor of Cidde	janissary ağa
CERRAH MUSTAFA AĞA	imperial household	dülbend ağa, silahdar	15 M 1099/ 21 November 1687	1 R 1099/ 4 February 1688	guardian of Seddülbahir	beylerbey of Tunusia
HARPUTLU HACI ALİ AĞA	Military	turnacı, sekbanbaşı	1 R 1099/ 4 February 1688	27 R 1099/ 1 March 1688	executed	janissary ağa
DARBAKÇI ALİ AĞA	Military	soldier from 1st janissary regiment	27 R 1099/ 1 March 1688	20 C 1099/ 22 April 1688	executed	janissary ağa
MÜEZZİNZÂDE HASAN AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	peşkir, dülbend ağası, chief gardener	20 C 1099/ 22 April 1688	6 L 1099/ 4 August 1688	vizier	vizier
KOCA MAHMUD AĞA PAŞA	Military	devşirme ağası, asesbaşı, kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	6 L 1099/ 4 August 1688	10 S 1101/ 23 November 1689	vizier	vizier
EBUBEKİR AĞA PAŞA	Military	ex-kul kethüda, guardian of Midilli	10 S 1101/ 23 November 1689	15 Ş 1101/ 24 May 1690	governor of Nigbolu	beylerbey of Anatolia

ARABACI KADI ALİ AĞA	steward	from imperial stables and deputy to chief accountant	15 Ş 1101/ 24 May 1690	2 Ş 1102/ 1 May 1691	kaimmakam, vizier	grand vizier: 19.8.1691-27.3.1692
ÇİKOĞLU MEHMED AĞA	military	from the corps, steward to grand vizier	2 Ş 1102/ 1 May 1691	8 Z 1102/ 2 September 1691	died	janissary ağa
EĞİNLİ MEHMED AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüdası	8 Z 1102/ 2 September 1691	1 R 1103/ 22 December 1691	executed	janissary ağa
DALTABAN MUSTAFA AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	mirahor-ı sani, kapıcıbaşılık, ex-chief armorer	1 R 1103/ 22 December 1691	2 N 1103/ 18 May 1692	guardian of Özi	grand vizier: 4.9.1702-14.1.1703?
ÇELEBİ İSMAİL AĞA PAŞA	military	muhzır, kul kethüda, guardian of different places, sadaret kaim-makam	2 N 1103/ 18 May 1692	11 Ş 1104/ 17 April 1693	beylerbey of Damascus	beylerbey of Rumelia
GÜRCÜ ELHAC ABDULLAH AĞA	military	kul kethüda beylerbey of Rumelia, mutasarrıf of Bursa,	11 Ş 1104/ 17 April 1693	10 L 1105/ 4 June 1694	guardian Belgrad	janissary ağa
MURAD AĞA PAŞA	military	armourer, ex-guardian of Azak	10 L 1105/ 4 June 1694	18 N 1106/ 2 May 1695	governor of Izmit	janissary ağa
ÇELEBİ AREC YUSUF AĞA PAŞA	imperial household	steward to haseki sultan	18 N 1106/ 2 May 1695	2 L 1106/ 16 May 1695	governor of Özi	janissary ağa
DELİ BALTAZADE MAHMUD AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	2 L 1106/ 16 May 1695	1 R 1109/ 17 October 1697	died	janissary ağa

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

ÇELEBİ İBRAHİM AĞA PAŞA	bureaucracy	ex-sadaret kaimmakam	1 R 1109/ 17 October 1697	21 L 1109/ 2 May 1698	guardian of Boğazhisar	beylerbey of Van?
KÜRD İBRAHİM AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüdası	21 L 1109/ 2 May 1698	3 Za 1112/ 11 April 1701	governor of Musul	beylerbey of Rumelia
DOĞRAMACIZADE MEHMED AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	3 Za 1112/ 11 April 1701	13 Z 1114/ 30 April 1703	vizier, governor of Hanya	beylerbey of Bosnia
DELLAK ALİ AĞA	military, bureaucracy	sipahiler ağası, sadaret kethüda	13 Z 1114/ 30 April 1703	8 S 1115/ 23 June 1703	guardian of Belgrade	beylerbey, kaimmakam
ARNAVUD OSMAN AĞA PAŞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	8 S 1115/ 23 June 1703	8 Ra 1115/ 22 July 1703	mirü'l-hac, governor of Damascus	beylerbey of Damascus
ELHAC ÇALIK AHMED AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, ex-kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	8 Ra 1115/ 22 July 1703	5 B 1115/ 14 November 1703	executed	janissary ağa
ÇELEBİ MEHMED AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda, ex-sekbanbaşı	5 B 1115/ 14 November 1703	17 B 1116/ 15 November 1704	retired	janissary ağa
BOŞNAK HASAN PAŞA	military	saksoncubaşı, sekbanbaşı, ex-steward to grand vizier, governor of Bursa	17 B 1116/ 15 November 1704	29 Ş 1116/ 27 December 1704	governor of Hüdavendigar	janissary ağa
TORTUMLU İBRAHİM AĞA	military	saksoncubaşı, zağarcıbaşı	29 Ş 1116/ 27 December 1704	6 Za 1116/ 2 March 1705	retired	janissary ağa
ÇELEBİ MEHMED AĞA	military	ex- janissary ağa	6 Za 1116/ 2 March 1705	10 B 1118/ 18 October 1706	kaimmakam	kaimmakam
ARNAVUD OSMAN AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	10 B 1118/ 18 October 1706	19 Z 1118/ 24 March 1707	died	janissary ağa

BALLI MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	19 Z 1118/ 24 March 1707	6 Z 1119/ 28 February 1708	governor of Niğbolu	kaimmakam
KOCA KARA MUSTAFA AĞA	military	kul kethüda	6 Z 1119/ 28 February 1708	9 Ş 1122/ 3 October 1710	banished to Gelibolu	janissary ağa
GÜRCÜ YUSUF AĞA PAŞA	military	ex-kul kethüda, kul kethüda	9 Ş 1122/ 3 October 1710	9 L 1123/ 20 November 1711	grand vizier	grand vizier: 20.11.1711-12.11.1712
ÇELEBİ MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	military	ex-janissary ağa, vizier	9 L 1123/ 20 November 1711	22 N 1124/ 23 October 1712	kaimmakam	Kaimmakam
KOCA KARA MUSTAFA AĞA	military	ex-janissary ağa	22 N 1124/ 23 October 1712	28 S 1125/ 26 March 1713	banished to Malkara	janissary ağa
ARNAVUD HACI DELİ EBUBEKİR AĞA	military	kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı	28 S 1125/ 26 March 1713	4 B 1125/ 27 July 1713	vizier, governor of Köstendil	janissary ağa, vizier
KÜRD HASAN AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda; sekbanbaşı	4 B 1125/ 27 July 1713	1 N 1127/ 31 August 1715	governor of Chania	janissary ağa
DARBUNE EBUBEKİR AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüdası	1 N 1127/ 31 August 1715	8 S 1128/ 2 February 1716	beylerbey of Erzurum	beylerbey of Erzurum
BAYRAKTAR ZİLELİ HÜSEYİN AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	8 S 1128/ 2 February 1716	1 C 1129/ 13 May 1717	banished to Bihke	janissary ağa
ERMENİ MEHMED AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	1 C 1129/ 13 May 1717	29 M 1130/ 2 January 1718	banished to Tekfurdağı, guardian of Niş	janissary ağa
MUHSİNZADE ABDULLAH AĞA PAŞA	bureaucracy	sadaret kethüda, beylerbey of Rumelia and Aleppo	29 M 1130/ 2 January 1718	21 S 1131/ 13 January 1719	defterdar of Morea, governor of Morea	defterdar and beylerbey

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

FINDIKZADE AHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüdası	21 S 1131/ 13 January 1719	1 B 1131/ 20 May 1719	banished to Tekfurdağı	janissary ağa
ERMENİ MEHMED AĞA	military	ex-janissary ağa	1 B 1131/ 20 May 1719	20 R 1136/ 17 January 1724	Died	janissary ağa
KETHÜDA HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	20 R 1136/ 17 January 1724	17 Ra 1143/ 30 September 1730	banished to Rhodes	janissary ağa
SARRAC KEL MEHMED AĞA	military	ex-çorbacı	17 Ra 1143/ 30 September 1730	13 R 1143/ 26 October 1730	Dismissed	janissary ağa?
MUHSİNZADE ABDULLAH AĞA PAŞA	bureaucracy	director of imperial mint, beylerbey of Niş, kapıcıbaşı	13 R 1143/ 26 October 1730	23 N 1143/ 1 April 1731	governor of Adana	grand vizier: 6.8.1737-19.12.1737
ŞAHİN MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	military	saksoncubaşı, kul kethüda, Adana governor,	23 N 1143/ 1 April 1731	6 Ra 1144/ 8 September 1731	kaimmakam, grand admiral	grand admiral
KÖLE GÜRCÜ İSMAİL AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	6 Ra 1144/ 8 September 1731	2 S 1145/ 25 July 1732	beylerbey of Rumelia	grand vizier: 12.7.1735-9.1.1736
ÇELEBİ KETHÜDA-BEYZADE ABDÜLBAKİ AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüdası	2 S 1145/ 25 July 1732	L 1145/ March-April 1733	banished to Gelibolu	janissary ağa
ALTINCI MUSTAFA AĞA	military	ex-saksoncubaşı, commander of Edirne	L 1145/ March-April 1733	B 1147/ November-December 1734	Dismissed	janissary ağa
ABDULLAH AĞA PAŞA	military	saksoncubaşı, kul kethüda	B 1147/ November-December 1734	19 Ra 1151/ 7 July 1738	Died	janissary ağa

DELİ ESSEYYİD HASAN AĞA PAŞA	military	çorbacı, ex-kul kethüda, kul kethüda	19 Ra 1151/ 7 July 1738	4 Ş 1156/ 23 September 1743	vizier, grand vizier	grand vizier: 23.9.1743-9.8.1746
ERZURUMİ YAZICIZADE ELHAC İBRAHİM AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda	4 Ş 1156/ 23 September 1743	27 M 1158/ 1 March 1745	vizier, governor of Erzurum	Beylerbey
MALATYALI İBRAHİM AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	27 M 1158/ 1 March 1745	3 S 1160/ 14 February 1747	governor of Aydın	Beylerbey
KELLECİ MUSTAFA AĞA	military	kul kethüda	3 S 1160/ 14 February 1747	25 Ra 1161/ 25 March 1748	banished to Gelibolu	janissary ağa
HÜSEYİN AĞA	military	?	25 Ra 1161/ 25 March 1748	25 B 1161/ 21 July 1748	banished to Bursa	janissary ağa
HACI HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	25 B 1161/ 21 July 1748	25 S 1163/ 3 February 1750	governor of Hotin	beylerbey of Rumelia
KELLECİ MUSTAFA AĞA	military	ex-janissary ağa	25 S 1163/ 3 February 1750	23 Ca 1163/ 30 April 1750	banished to Gelibolu	janissary ağa
DELİ EMİR SEYYİD AHMED AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	23 Ca 1163/ 30 April 1750	1 S 1164/ 30 December 1750	vizier, governor of Sayda	Beylerbey
DARBUNEZADE SEYYİD NUMAN AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	1 S 1164/ 30 December 1750	4 Ş 1164/ 28 June 1751	banished to Erzurum	janissary ağa
MACAR HACI HASAN AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, ex-kul kethüda	4 Ş 1164/ 28 June 1751	21 Ş 1165/ 4 July 1752	banished to Limni, mirimiran of Hotin	beylerbey, grand admiral
SARI MUSTAFA AĞA	military	kul kethüda	21 Ş 1165/ 4 July 1752	4 C 1168/ 18 March 1755	Kaimmakam	Kaimmakam
AHISKALI MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	4 C 1168/ 18 February 1755	9 M 1169/ 15 October 1755	banished to Manisa	beylerbey of Karaman
DİBACIZADE İBRAHİM AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	9 M 1169/ 15 October 1755	1 B 1170/ 22 March 1757	sadaret kaimmakam	Kaimmakam

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

NALBAND ÇELEBİ MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	1 B 1170/ 22 March 1757	29 Ş 1171/ 8 May 1758	governor of Eğriboz, Karlıeli	janissary ağa
VEFALI MEHMED AĞA	military	chief scribe of the janissary army, kul kethüda	29 Ş 1171/ 8 May 1758	17 M 1172/ 20 September 1758	Dismissed	janissary ağa
AHISKALI MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	military	ex-janissary ağa	17 M 1172/ 20 September 1758	18 M 1173/ 11 September 1759	banished to Tekfurdağı	janissary ağa
KAPIKIRAN MEHMED AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda, commander of Belgrade	18 M 1173/ 11 September 1759	10 L 1174/ 15 May 1761	banished to Manisa, vizier	Vizier
MAHMUD AĞA	military	kul kethüda	10 L 1174/ 15 May 1761	5 S 1175/ 5 September 1761	banished to Tekfurdağı	janissary ağa?
NİŞLİ MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	5 S 1175/ 5 September 1761	24 R 1176/ 12 November 1762	kaimmakam	grand admiral and beylerbey
ÖMER AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	24 R 1176/ 12 November 1762	1 S 1178/ 31 July 1764	banished to Dimetoka	janissary ağa
HÜSEYİN HÜSNÜ AĞA PAŞA	military	turnacıbaşı, kul kethüda	1 S 1178/ 31 July 1764	15 Ş 1178/ 7 February 1765	grand admiral with rank of beylerbey	grand admiral and vizier
ÖMER AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	15 Ş 1178/ 7 February 1765	21-29 S 1179/ 9-17 August 1765	banished to Limni	janissary ağa
TOSUN MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	21-29 S 1179/ 9-17 August 1765	R 1180/ September-October 1766	vizier, governor of Karaman	grand admiral and vizier
TOPALOĞLU OSMAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	R 1180/ September-October 1766	28 M 1182/ 14 June 1768	banished to Dimetoka	beylerbey of Bosnia

ABRAS SÜLEYMAN AĞA PAŞA	military	ex-kul kethüda, commander of Bağdad	28 M 1182/ 14 June 1768	14 Za 1183/ 11 March 1770	vizier, kaimmakam	vizier and kaimmakam
KAPIKIRAN MEHMED PAŞA	military	ex-janissary ağa, guardian of Vidin	14 Za 1183/ 11 March 1770	20 R 1184/ 13 August 1770	banished to Dimetoka	janissary ağa
KALAFAT MEHMED AĞA	military	çorbacı, ağa silahdarı, zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	20 R 1184/ 13 August 1770	10 Ş 1184/ 29 November 1770	banished to Tekfurdağı	janissary ağa
KUYUCU SÜLEYMAN AĞA PAŞA	bureaucracy and military	scribe to janissary army, kul kethüdası	10 Ş 1184/ 29 November 1770	16 C 1187/ 4 September 1773	banished to Tekfurdağı	Kaimmakam
YEĞEN MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	military	commander of Belgrade and then Wallachia, turnacı, kul kethüdası	16 C 1187/ 4 September 1773	27 B 1187/ 14 October 1773	kaimmakam	grand vizier: 25.8.1782-31.12.1782
SEKBANBAŞI İSMAİL AĞA	military	sekbanbaşı	27 B 1187/ 14 October 1773	15 C 1189/ 13 August 1775	banished to Gelibolu	janissary ağa
KIRKBEŞ MUSTAFA AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	15 C 1189/ 13 August 1775	22 Z 1189/ 13 February 1776	banished to Gelibolu	janissary ağa
BOYNU EĞRİ TURNACIZADE TİRYAKİ HEZARGRADLI GAZİ AHMED İZZET AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	22 Z 1189/ 13 February 1776	9 S 1191/ 19 March 1777	governor of Tırhala	janissary ağa
KALAFAT MEHMED AĞA PAŞA	military	ex-janissary Ağa	9 S 1191/ 19 March 1777	8 Ş 1192/ 1 September 1778	grand vizier	grand vizier: 1.9.1778-21.8.1779
İBRAHİM AĞA	military	kul kethüda	8 Ş 1192/ 1 September 1778	S 1193/ March 1779	banished to Tekfurdağı	janissary ağa

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

EBUBEKİR AĞA	military	çorbacı, muhzır, kul kethüda	S 1193/ March 1779	20 N 1193/ 1 October 1779	governor of Kocaeli	vizier, beylerbey of Rumelia
SÜLEYMAN AĞA	steward	steward to Zorluoğlu, commander of Özi	20 N 1193/ 1 October 1779	4 Za 1196/ 11 October 1782	guardian of Hotin	vizier, governor of Diyarbakır
ALİ AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	4 Za 1196/ 11 October 1782	Ş 1196/ July-August 1782	vizier	vizier, janissary ağa
KUL KETHÜDASI MEHMED AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda	Ş 1196/ July-August 1782	Z 1196/ November-December 1782	died later	janissary ağa
MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	Z 1196/ November-December 1782	20 N 1197/ 19 August 1783	vizier, guardian of Chania	vizier, janissary ağa
MİRALEM EBUBEKİR AĞA	military	kul kethüda	20 N 1197/ 19 August 1783	1198/ 1784	governor of Kocaeli	beylerbey of Rumelia
MAHMUD AĞA	military	Edirne ağası, zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda,	1198/ 1784	15 Ş 1198/ 4 July 1784	mirimiran, vizier, guardian of Silistria	vizier and janissary ağa
YAHYA AĞA	military	ex-janissary ağa, kul kethüda	15 Ş 1198/ 4 July 1784	4 C 1199/ 14 April 1785	governor of Silistria	janissary ağa
KARA AHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	4 C 1199/ 14 April 1785	8 Za 1199/ 12 September 1785	vizier, governor of Hotin	vizier and janissary ağa
PEKMEZCİ SİVASLI MEHMED AĞA	military	ex-kul kethüda, commander of Özi	8 Za 1199/ 12 September 1785	2 C 1200/ 2 April 1786	governor Köstendil	beylerbey of Karaman
YUSUF AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüdası	2 C 1200/ 2 April 1786	16 N 1200/ 13 July 1786	died	janissary ağa

HASAN AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	16 N 1200/ 13 July 1786	17 C 1202/ 25 March 1788	vizier, kaimmakam	vizier and kaimmakam
KELLECİ SEYYİD OSMAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	17 C 1202/ 25 march 1788	12 L 1202/ 16 July 1788	vizier, beylerbey of Aleppo	vizier and janissary ağa
MEHMED EMİN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	12 L 1202/ 16 July 1788	22 M 1203/ 23 October 1788	banished to Gelibolu	janissary ağa
HAFIZ SALİH AĞA	military	kul kethüda	22 M 1203/ 23 October 1788	7 Z 1203/ 29 August 1789	sekbanbaşı	vizier
HASAN AĞA PAŞA	military	kaimmakam, ex-janissary ağa	7 Z 1203/ 29 August 1789	5 Ca 1204/ 21 January 1790	guardian of Pazarcık and Bender	kaimmakam
YAHYA AĞA	military	kul kethüda	5 Ca 1204/ 21 January 1790	18 Ş 1204/ 3 May 1790	dismissed	janissary ağa
HASAN PAŞA	military	vizier ve kaimmakam	18 Ş 1204/ 3 May 1790	22 Ca 1205/ 27 January 1791	serasker of Maçin	vizier and kaimmakam
PEKMEZCİ SİVASLI MEHMED AĞA PAŞA (2)	military	commander-in-chief of Vidin	22 Ca 1205/ 29 January 1791	15 Za 1205/ 16 July 1791	serasker of Rumelia	serasker
BOŞNAK BEKTAŞİ SÜLEYMAN AĞA PAŞA	military	Maçin ordu ağası, sabık kul kethüdası	15 Za 1205/ 17 July 1791	23 M 1206/ 22 September 1791	banished to Filibe	janissary ağa
ARABZADE SEYYİD AHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	23 M 1206/ 22 September 1791	4 Za 1206/ 24 June 1792	banished to Bursa	janissary ağa
MEHMED SAİD AĞA	bureaucracy	scribe to janissary army,chief clerk, sekbanbaşı	4 Za 1206/ 24 June 1792	28 M 1207/ 15 September 1792	banished to Dimetoka	janissary ağa
TOKADLI MUSTAFA AĞA	military	kul kethüda	28 M 1207/ 15 September 1792	24 Ca 1212/ 14 November 1797	banished to Tekirdağ	janissary ağa
EYÜP AĞA	military	kul kethüda, ex-sekbanbaşı	24 Ca 1212/ 14 November 1797	21 Ca 1213/ 31 October 1798	banished to Bursa, Manisa	janissary ağa

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

VEFALI ÖMER AĞA	military	ex-sekbanbaşı	21 Ca 1213/ 31 October 1798	3 R 1217/ 3 August 1802	guardian of Ariş	janissary ağa
AHMED AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı	3 R 1217/ 3 August 1802	19 C 1217/ 17 October 1802	banished to Bursa	janissary ağa
SEYYİD HALİL AĞA	military	sekbanbaşı	19 C 1217/ 17 October 1802	14 S 1218/ 5 June 1803	kaimmakam with the rank of vizier	kaimmakam and vizier
TOKADLI MUSTAFA AĞA	military	ex janissary ağa	14 S 1218/ 5 June 1803	12 Ca 1219/ 19 August 1804	banished to Kadıköy	janissary ağa
KEÇİBOYNUZİ İBRAHİM HİLMİ AĞA PAŞA	military	kul kethüda	12 Ca 1219/ 19 August 1804	1 B 1221/ 14 September 1806	grand vizier	grand vizier: 14.10.1806-18.6.1807
BOSNALI OSMAN AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	2 B 1221/ 14 September 1806	24 Ş 1221/ 6 November 1806	died	janissary ağa
PEHLİVAN HÜSEYİN AĞA PAŞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	25 Ş 1221/ 7 November 1806	12 Ca 1222/ 18 July 1807	murdered	janissary ağa
SELİM AĞA	military	turnacıbaşı, saksoncu , kul kethüdası	12 Ca 1222/ 18 July 1807	1222/ 1807	died	janissary ağa
KASIM AĞA	military	kul kethüda	1222/ 1807	1222/ 1807	died?	janissary ağa
İZMİRLİ HALİL AĞA	military	kul kethüda	1222/ 1807	B 1222/ September-October 1807	banished to İzmir	kaimmakam
MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	B 1222/ September-October 1807	Ş 1222/ October-November 1807	died	janissary ağa

MUSTAFA AĞA	military	kul kethüda	Ş 1222/ October-November 1807	N 1222/ November-December 1807	?	?
MEHMED AĞA	military	?	N 1222/ November-December 1807	20 Ra 1223/ 16 May 1808 ?	?	?
HACI MEHMED AĞA	military	?	20 Ra 1223/ 16 May 1808	R 1223/ May-June 1808	?	?
SÜLEYMAN AĞA	military	?	R 1223/ May-June 1808	26 Ca 1223/ 20 July 1808	died	janissary ağa
GİRİTLİ AHMED AĞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, sofya ordu ağası, kul kethüdası	26 Ca 1223/ 20 July 1808	2 B 1223/ 24 August 1808	?	?
VANLI SARI MUSTAFA AĞA	military	31 bölükbaşısı, odabaşı, zağarcıbaşı	2 B 1223/ 24 August 1808	27 N 1223/ 16 November 1808	murdered by janissaries	janissary ağa
MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	27 N 1223/ 16 November 1808	1 S 1224/ 18 March 1809	banished to Tekfurdağı	janissary ağa?
KARSLI ELHAC MEHMED AĞA	military	sekbanbaşı	1 S 1224/ 18 March 1809	18 R 1224/ 2 June 1809	banished, later died	janissary ağa
HASAN AĞA PAŞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	18 R 1224/ 2 June 1809	14 C 1224/ 27 June 1809?	?	?
LAZKİYELİ MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	14 C 1225/ 27 June 1809?	15 R 1225/ 20 May 1810	?	?
YAZICI MEHMED SAİD AĞA	bureaucracy	scribe	15 R 1225/ 20 May 1810	1 Ş 1225/ 1 September 1810	died	janissary ağa
ONUNCU SALİH AĞA	military	kul kethüda	1 Ş 1225/ 1 September 1810	4 Ra 1229/ 24 February 1814	retired?	janissary ağa

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

MEHMED ŞERİF AĞA	military	sekbanbaşı	4 Ra 1229/ 24 February 1814	29 Ra 1230/ 11 March 1815	murdered	janissary ağa
MEHMED ŞAKİR AĞA	military	kul kethüda	29 Ra 1230/ 11 March 1815	20 C 1230/ 30 May 1815	?	?
ESSEYYİD HÜSEYİN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	20 C 1230/ 30 May 1815	18 Za 1230/ 22 October 1815	?	?
OSMAN AĞA	military	?	18 Za 1230/ 22 October 1815	R 1231/ March 1816	?	?
ABDÜLHAMİD HALİL AĞA	military	?	R 1231/ March 1816	3 C 1231/ 1 May 1816	banished	guardian of Akdeniz
MUSTAFA ŞERİF AĞA	military	kul kethüda	3 C 1231/ 1 May 1816	29 Ş 1231/ 25 July 1816	died	janissary ağa
HALİL AĞA	military	kul kethüda	29 Ş 1231/ 25 July 1816	29 L 1231/ 22 September 1816	?	?
HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	29 L 1231/ 22 September 1816	5 Ra 1232/ 23 January 1817	died in exile in Tekfurdağ	janissary ağa
MUSTAFA AĞA	military	kul kethüda	5 Ra 1232/ 23 January 1817	29 B 1232/ 14 June 1817	?	?
MEHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	29 B 1232/ 14 June 1817	7 S 1233/ 17 December 1817	?	?
İBRAHİM AĞA	military	kul kethüda	7 S 1233/ 17 December 1817	7 L 1233/ 10 August 1818	?	?
ALİ AĞA	military	kul kethüda	7 L 1233/ 10 August 1818	25 Za 1233/ 26 September 1818	?	?
HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	25 Za 1233/ 26 September 1818	6 S 1234/ 5 December 1818	?	?

AHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	6 S 1234/ 5 December 1818	1 B 1234/ 26 April 1819	?	?
ESSEYYİD AHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	1 B 1234/ 26 April 1819	12 S 1235/ 30 November 1819	?	?
HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	12 S 1235/ 30 November 1819	5 R 1235/ 21 January 1820	?	?
ŞERİF ABDULLAH AĞA	military	kul kethüda	5 R 1235/ 21 January 1820	2 Ş 1235/ 15 May 1820	?	?
MAHMUD AĞA	military	kul kethüda	2 Ş 1235/ 15 May 1820	17 L 1235/ 28 July 1820	?	?
SEYDİ ALİ AĞA	military	kul kethüda	17 L 1235/ 28 July 1820	13 Z 1235/ 21 September 1820	?	?
KIRKBİRİNCİ ALİ AĞA	military	kul kethüda	13 Z 1235/ 21 September 1820	29 Za 1236/ 28 August 1821	?	?
HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	29 Za 1236/ 28 August 1821	18 M 1237/ 15 October 1821	died in exile	janissary ağa
HÜSEYİN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	18 M 1237/ 15 October 1821	29 Ca 1237/ 21 February 1822	dismissed	janissary ağa
İSMAİL AĞA	military	kul kethüda, zağarcıbaşı	29 Ca 1237/ 21 February 1822	23 M 1238/ 10 October 1822	retired	janissary ağa
ESSEYYİD HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	23 M 1238/ 10 October 1822	23 S 1238/ 9 November 1822	banished to Bursa	janissary ağa?
OSMAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	23 S 1238/ 9 November 1822	10 R 1238/ 25 December 1822	dismissed	janissary ağa
ALİ AĞA	military	kul kethüda	10 R 1238/ 25 December 1822	14 C 1238/ 26 February 1823	dismissed	janissary ağa

TABLE 18.1 *Career, appointment and dismissal dates of the Janissary Ağas (1515-1826)* (cont.)

RUSCUKLU HÜSEYİN AĞA PAŞA	military	zağarcıbaşı, kul kethüda	14 C 1238/ 26 February 1823	17 R 1239/ 21 December 1823	governor of Bursa	serasker
ÇİNELİ AHMED AĞA	military	kul kethüda	17 R 1239/ 21 December 1823	12 C 1239/ 13 February 1824	dismissed	janissary ağa
BİRİNCİ ALİ AĞA	military	zağarcıbabaşı, kul kethüda	12 C 1239/ 13 February 1824	26 Z 1239/ 22 August 1824	?	?
SÜLEYMAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	26 Z 1239/ 22 August 1824	22 C 1240/ 11 February 1825	?	?
HASAN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	22 C 1240/ 11 February 1825	25 M 1241/ 9 September 1825	died in exile	janissary ağa
MEHMED CELALEDDİN AĞA	military	kul kethüda	25 M 1241/ 9 September 1825	8 Za 1241/ 15 June 1826	serasker of Asakir-i Muhammediye	serasker

Sources: BOA, A. RSK. d. 1453 fl. 16; A. RSK.d. 1472, fl. 79; A. RSK.d. 1474, fls. 169, 178; A. RSK. d. 1477, fl. 42; A. RSK. d. 1484, fls. 27, 50, 62, 74, 119, 181; A. RSK.d 1497, fl. 9; A. RSK.d. 1498, fl.60; A. RSK. d. 1501, fl. 19; A. RSK. d. 1562, fl. 11; A. RSK.d 1572, fls. 45, 56; A. RSK. 1588, fl. 26; A. RSK.d. 1589, fls. 4, 12, 13, 46, 47, 53, 54, 55, 64, 67,70, 82, 89, 121; A. RSK.d. 1593, fls. 15, 40; A. RSK.d. 1598, fls. 4, 121; A. RSK.d 1601, fls. 53; A. RSK. 1609, fl. 1; A. RSK.d 1698-B, fl. 36; KK. d 239, fl. 273; KK 244, fl. 118; KK.d. 257, fls. 86, 106; KK. d. 258, fl 32; KK d. 262, fl. 2; KK. d. 265, fl. 6; KK.d. 266, fls. 31, 88; KK. d. 523-M, fl. 216; A.d. 2983, fl. 3; A. DVNSNŞT.d. 2 fls. 16, 25, 42, 58, 68, 91, 92, 105, 112, 116, 133, 139; A. DVN.SNŞT.d. 16, fls. 6, 44, 48; A. DVN SNŞT.d 1435, fl. 40; A. DVN. KLB 172/46; HAT 124/5123; HAT 1163-9; HAT 1163-9; HAT 1509-37-01; HAT 1451/5; HAT 53435; C. AS. 58/2737; C. AS. 567/23849; C. AS. 1003/43871; C. DH 122/6095, fl. 22; MAD 559, fls. 2; 31, 103; MAD, 563, fl. 28; Sadaret, d. 357, fls. 9, 55, 61, 81, 89, 105, Tahvil Defteri 16, fl. 264; Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, Tarih-i Cevdet, 12 vols., Dersaadet: 1309/1891; Ahmed Vasıf Efendi, Tarih-i Vasıf, Istanbul University TY 5978; Ahmed Vasıf Efendi, Mehâsinü'l-Âsâr ve Hakâikül-Âhbâr, ed. M. İlgürel, Istanbul 1978; Afyoncu E., "Semiz Ali Paşa, DİA, pp. 495-96; Ak, M., "Siyavuş Paşa, Kanijeli," DİA, pp. 311-13; Akkaya, A., Vecihi Devri ve Eseri 1637-1661/1057-1071, unpublished Ph.d. dissertation, (Ankara University, 1957); Aktepe, M. (ed.), Şem'dânîzâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Tarihi: Müri't-Tevârih, 4 vols, Istanbul 1976; Arslan M. (ed.), Osmanlı Sadrazamları: Hadikatü'l-Vüzera ve Zeylleri, Istanbul 2013; Bayram, Ü. F., Enveri Tarihi, Üçüncü Cilt (Metin ve Değerlendirme), unpublished Ph.d. thesis (Istanbul University 2014); Behcetî Seyyid İbrahim Efendi, Tarih-i Sülale-i Köprülü (Transkripsiyon ve Tahlil), M.F. Gökçek unpublished M.A. thesis (Marmara University 2006); Beydilli, K., "Evreka, Evraka veya Errare Humanum Est," İlmi Araştırmalar 9 (2000), pp. 45-66;

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First Period: 1515-1612

Simply put, the janissary ağas were the most senior commanders of the janissary corps, both in the imperial center and the provinces. The obscurities surrounding the origins and general history of the janissary army also apply to its command structure. Controversies among historians regarding the establishment of the janissary corps are longstanding, and continue to this day: according to one group of historians, it was founded during the reign of Murad I (r. 1362-1389). A second group believes that it was established during the reign of Bayezid. More recently, Kemal Beydilli has proposed to date the foundation of the army to the reign of Orhan (r. 1324-1362) at the earliest, and to the reign of Murad I at the latest.[6]

Like the janissary army, the nature and promotion pattern of the janissary ağas changed significantly throughout its history. According to traditional accounts, the commanders of the newly established army were initially recruited from the janissary ağas, attended by the *sekbanbaşı*s, who at this time were the commanders of a separate military unit. But due to the unruly acts of the janissaries in 1451, Mehmed II (r. 1451-1481) abolished the ağa-ship and appointed the *sekbanbaşı*s from the highest rank-and-file.[7] This was an effort on the part of Mehmed II to centralize the military institutions, including the janissary army. Around the same time, in order to secure his financial control over the janissaries, he ended the practice of appointing the scribes who kept the records of the army from the members of the corps, and began to appoint them from the ranks of the civilian bureaucrats.[8] Indeed, from then on it

6 For further details see Kemal Beydilli, "Yeniçeriler," *DİA*, pp. 450-54.

7 When Karamanoğlu Ibrahim Bey violated the peaceful relations with the Ottomans, Mehmed II personally led a campaign against him. Upon the sultan's arrival in Bursa, the janissaries came and asked him for accession money. Furious at this disrespectful act on the part of his own soldiers, the sultan ordered them all to be executed (*katl-i amm*), but changed his mind upon the supplication of some of his viziers and the ulema. He seems, however, to have held their commander Kazancı Doğan responsible and had him and other rank-and-file of the janissary army punished. Immediately after this incident, the sultan dismissed Kazancı Doğan and appointed Mustafa Ağa. Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, vol. II: Fatih Sultan Mehmed Devri, 1451-1481, ed. M.H. Şentürk, Ankara 2003, p. 7.

8 During the reign of Mehmed II, according to Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, the lower-ranked officers of the janissary army were chosen from the internal hirearchy. Yet the author argues that in the same law book of Mehmed II it was recommended that the janissary ağas and their scribes not be appointed from the rank-and-file. He argues that a janissary ağa appointed from within would be able to exert his authority over the corps, but would also increase internal rivalry and, of course, abuses. Indeed, he remarks that after

became an established tradition that the appointment of the janissary scribes (*yeniçeri katibi*/*yeniçeri efendisi*) was completely independent from the corps. Mehmed II also tried to get rid of unruly and highly politicized elements in the janissaries. He reorganized the whole corps and introduced the large palace guard – the *sekban* regiments (the keeper of the hounds) – units into the janissary army, with the purpose of keeping the army in check and securing their loyalty to his person.[9]

From 1451 to 1515, eleven *sekbanbaşı*s had commanded the janissary army; after the above-mentioned imperial council of 1515, the janissary ağas began to be given the command.[10] Actually, the historical reality of the 1515 meeting is not beyond question: there is another account which dates the appointment of the janissary ağas as the highest commander of the corps to the reign of Bayezid II. According to this second account, the unruly acts of the janissaries at an imperial council had angered the sultan, and upon subsequent investigation it was discovered that it was due to a conspiracy by Sekbanbaşı Bayezid Ağa. Consequently, he was put to death, and a *silahdar* or *miralem* appointed as the new ağa.[11] The main source of evidence for the second account, which is the one promoted by Uzunçarşılı, is the famous *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan* (Laws of Janissaries). Although the title suggests that it was a book of regulations, it is actually a memoir-like account by a janissary scribe on the former traditions of the janissary corps. Therefore his account also remains open to question. The only real evidence Uzunçarşılı brings forward to prove the case is the fact that after the execution of Bayezid Ağa the mosque he had commissioned remained incomplete and was completed by order of the sultan.[12]

990/1582-83, the post of the janissary scribe was granted to officials of janissary background and that subsequently there was increase in the number of janissaries recruited to the corps. Due to the abuses of the scribes, he argues, the number of the janissaries were inflated from 13 thousand to 20-30 thousand soldiers. *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, II, p. 94. Mesut Uyar and Edward J. Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans, From Osman to Atatürk*, California: Oxford 2009, p. 37.

9 Uyar & Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, p. 32.

10 Öztuna provides a list of the *sekbanbaşı*s who acted as commander of the janissary army from 1452 to 1515: Hasan Ağa (1451), Abdurrahman Ağa, Balaban Ağa, Trabzonlu Mehmed Bey, Yakub Ağa (-1462), Ramazan Ağa, Karagöz Mehmed Ağa, İbrahim Ağa (1485), Karagöz Ağa (1497), Yunus Ağa and Balyemez Osman Ağa (1515). Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, II, p. 980.

11 Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 167.

12 *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan*, *Yeniçeri Kanunları*, ed. Tayfun Toroser, Istanbul 2011, p. 123; Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 167, ft. 2.

To my knowledge, the case of Balyemez Osman Ağa is more clear and well-documented. The real cause of his execution seems to have been directly related to one of the most important expectations of the imperial center from the commanders of the janissary army, namely keeping the janissaries in order and being responsible for their disobedience. The janissaries had been involved in unruly acts on several occasions during the course of the Çaldıran campaign. On 25 C 920/17 August 1514, they twice revolted (*şenaat*) in Van, complaining of miserable conditions during the campaign. On 8 M 921/22 February 1515, they revolted again, this time in Amasya, attacking the tents of Dukakinoğlu Ahmed Paşa and Piri Mehmed Paşa.[13] It is clear that the sultan had not forgotten these incidents, especially the one in Amasya. Consequently, after the campaign, he held meetings with the ruling elite and with the janissary ağa. Following the meeting, the *sekbanbaşı* and 10 *yayabaşı*s (chief of infantrymen) and the ağa of *acemi oğlan* (literally 'foreign boys', meaning the preliminary stage in janissary training) were summoned. Selim I reminded them of the incident in Amasya and demanded the names of culprits involved in the incident. The janissaries discussed the issue among themselves, but instead of giving specific names they sought safety in anonymity, and decided to reply that all of them were responsible and so beg for forgiveness. This does not seem to have satisfied the sultan, since sekbanbaşı Balyemez Osman Ağa was executed on 8 B 921/18 August 1515.[14]

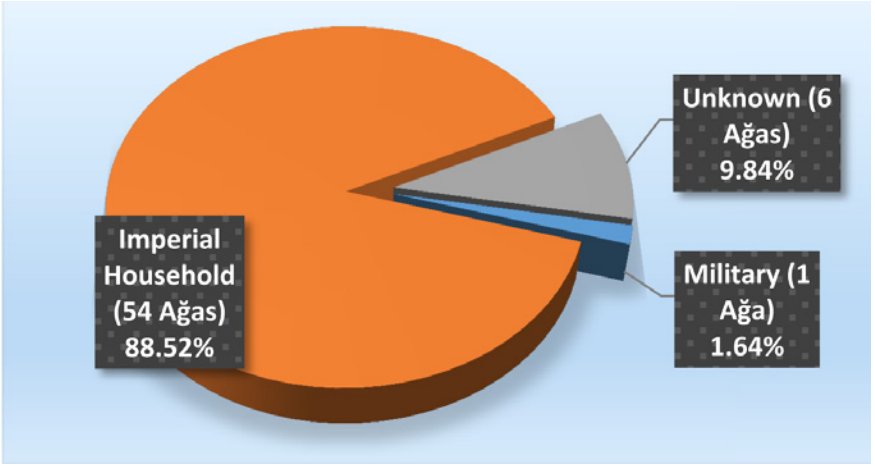
This date is significant for another reason. Even though janissary ağas subsequently became the commanders of the whole janissary army, they were promoted not from the rank-and-file of the janissary corps, but from the imperial household. Indeed, from the second decade of the sixteenth century (1515) to the beginning of the seventeenth century (1612), an overwhelming majority of the janissary ağas were recruited from the servants of the imperial household.

From among 61 janissary ağas of this period, I was able to find reliable information on the former duties of 53 of them. Among them, there is only one guardian of the Yedikule fortress and one *azablar ağası* (commander of foot soldiers),[15] the rest being recruited mostly from the members of the imperial

13 Feridun Ahmed Bey, *Münşeaat*, 2 vols, Istanbul 1265-1274/1848-1858, I, pp. 461, 464; Feridun Emecen, "Selim I," *DİA*, p. 409.

14 According to Feridun Ahmed, the meeting was held on 3 B 921/13 August 1515 and his property was confiscated. Feridun Ahmed, *Münşeeat*, I, pp. 466-67.

15 Kemal/Kemaleddin Ağa was appointed as the janissary ağa on 6 M 925/8 January 1519 while he was commander of the Yedikule fortresss; I could not find his dismissal date, but it seems that it was the same year. Şücaaeddin Ağa, a former *azablar ağa*, was appointed in 27 C 931/21 April 1525 and remained in the post until his death on 28 Z 932/5 October



GRAPH 18.1 *Career Distribution 1515-1612*

household. In fact, the janissary ağas belonged to the imperial household. They were the most senior officers of the *birun* (outer palace),[16] followed by *miralem* (master of the standard), *kapıcıbaşı* (head gate keeper), *mirahor* (master of the stable), *çaşnigir* (the senior chef), *sipah oğlanları ağası*, and the *silahdar ağa* (weapons bearer). These officials are usually referred as *üzengi ağa*s, meaning the ağas who walked at the stirrups of the sultan.[17] Apparently, in 1522 there was a change in the internal hierarchy of the *üzengi ağa*s, after which the *mirahor* became the highest in rank, followed by the *miralem* and *kapıcıbaşı*, thus increasing the chances of the *mirahor*s to achieve the position of janissary ağa.[18] Yet, as may also be observed from Table 18.1, there still does not seem to have been an established pattern, since the janissary ağas were being appointed from the ranks of *mirialem*s, *kapıcıbaşı*s, *mirahor*s, and *silahdar*s, probably

1526. Deli Ferhad Ağa (ağa from 20 B 1011/3 January 1603 to 1 Za 1011/12 April 1603) was a chief gardener before his promotion. Feridun Ahmed, *Münşeat*, I, p. 565; M.K. Özergin, *Sultan Kanuni Süleyman Han Çağına Ait Tarih Kaynakları*, Erzurum 1971, pp. 63-64; Zeyneb Aycibin, Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke, Tahlil ve Metin*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Mimar Sinan University, 2007), p. 417.

16 For more details on *birun*, see Abdülkadir Özcan, "birun," *DİA*, p. 205, and M. de Mouradge D'Ohsson, *Tableau Géneral de l'Empire Othoman*, 7 vols., Paris 1824, VII, pp. 6-39.

17 They were followed by *bölük ağaları*, *çavuşbaşı*, *kapıcılar kethüdası*, *cebecibaşı*, *helvacıbaşı*, and *topçubaşı*. Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, I, pp. 318-19; *Eyyubi Efendi Kanunnamesi*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan, Istanbul 1994, p. 42. For more details on *üzengi ağas*, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı*, Ankara 1988, pp. 389-408.

18 Feridun Ahmed, *Münşeat*, I, p. 536.

depending on socio-political conjunctures, personal talent, and, of course, the preference of the sultan. Among the *üzengi ağa*s, as far as the first period is concerned, the office of gate keepers stands out, 16 ağas being promoted from it to the office of janissary ağa. *Mirahor*s seem to have enjoyed a slightly lower number of promotions (13) to the same office. The third group of *üzengi ağa*s are the *miralem*s, of which 8 became janissary ağas, followed by *silahdar*s (6).[19] Comments by historian Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali in his *Künhü'l-Ahbar* confirm our observation: after repeating the fact that the janissary ağas were the most senior officers of the outer palace, Mustafa Ali asserts that the janissary ağas were usually but not exclusively chosen from among the *mirahor*s and *kapıcıbaşı*s, and sometimes also from the *miralem*s and other ağas of the outer palace.[20]

At first sight, the connection of a military establishment to the imperial household may appear strange; yet in fact there is nothing strange about the recruitment of the ağas from the members of the outer palace – we should not forget that, right from the beginning, the janissary army had been directly connected to the person of the sultan, and the janissary army had initially been recruited from levies of non-Muslim boys as a "*pençik*," meaning one fifth of the war booties that belonged to the sultan. Initially, therefore, they were the personal troops of the sultan himself. The names and functions of certain regiments (*orta*) strengthen our argument. The *sekbanbaşı*, for instance, was the head of the janissary regiments responsible for imperial hunts. The *zağarcı* was expected to take care of the dogs and also to participate in the imperial hunts. The *samsoncu/saksoncu*s had a similar function of keeping the dogs.

19 We should also note that in terms of the internal hierarchy there does not appear to have been a regular pattern. A list of promotions before being appointed to commandership of the janissary ağa confirms this observation: Yakub Ağa (silahdar-miralem); Mustafa Ağa (odabaşı-mirahor); Mehmed Ağa (çaşnigirbaşı-kapıcıbaşı); Güzelce Rüstem Ağa (silahdar-mirahor); Kara Ahmed Ağa (kapıcıbaşı-miralem); Semiz Kalın Ali Ağa (kapıcıbaşı-miralem); Müezzinzâde Ali Ağa (kapıcıbaşı-çaşnigir-mirahor); Cafer Ağa (silahdar-kapıcıbaşı); Siyavuş Ağa (mirahor-ı kebir-kapıcıbaşı); Cağaloğlu Sinan Ağa (silahdar-kapıcıbaşı); Cerrah Mehmed Ağa (hasoda cerrah-mirahor-ı kebir); Silahdar Damad İbrahim Ağa (mirahor-ı evvel-silahdar); Ferhad Ağa (kapıcıbaşı-mirahor); Maraşlı Kara Mehmed/Muhammed Ağa (doğancıbaşı-çakırcıbaşı-mirahor); Halil Ağa (silahdar-kapıcıbaşı); Saatçi Hasan Ağa (silahdar-miralem); Yemişçi Hasan Ağa (zülüflü baltacı-çaşnigir-kapıcılar kethüdası, kapıcıbaşı); Veli Ağa (küçük mirahor-kapıcılar kethüdası-kapıcıbaşı); Sarıkçı Mustafa Ağa (kapıcıbaşı); Kasım Ağa (kapıcılar kethüdası-mirahor); Türk Ahmed Ağa (kapıcılar kethüdası-kapıcıbaşı-mirahor-ı evvel-kapıcıbaşı); Nakkaş Hasan Ağa (anahtar oğlanı-dülbend gulamı-mirahor?-silahdar-kapıcıbaşı of second rank).

20 *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, II, p. 93.

The *turnacı*s were initially organized as taking care of the greyhounds used during the imperial hunts, as well as the crane (*turna*). *Haseki*s also had functions related to personal guards, such as accompanying the sultan's imperial hunts and his visits to the mosques. The *solak* (bodyguard archers) and their chief, the *solakbaşı*, on the other hand, can be considered as imperial bodyguards. Chosen from tall, handsome boys, the *solak*s accompanied the sultan on various occasions.[21]

And like the different regiments of the janissary army, most of the official duties of the janissary ağa were also directly connected to the sultan. He was expected to attend the imperial councils if the sultan was in the palace,[22] and also to accompany him during the Friday prayer and on religious festivals (otherwise the ağa would not attend the Friday prayer). More importantly, for a long time the janissary ağas did not participate in campaigns except for those led personally by the sultan, and during the campaigns they did not winter in a region without the sultan.[23] In a similar vein, at least until the reign of Bayezid II, the *kul kethüda*, the janissary ağa's deputy commander, would also not participate in campaigns which were not led by the sultan,[24] although in subsequent year the *kul kethüda*s began to lead the army even in the absence of the janissary ağas.[25] This therefore suggests that initially the janissary ağas and *kul kethüda*s as well as their soldiers were dependent on the sultan and mostly acted as his personal guards.

If follow Weberian logic, this fits into a model of the extension of the imperial household. It also suggests a low degree of professionalism. Samuel P. Huntington defines professionalism via the fey features of expertise (knowledge and skill), social responsibility, and corporateness (membership).[26] Military officership is a bureaucratic profession which monopolizes the "man-

21 Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 218.

22 Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 180. The janissary ağas were not members of the imperial council, but later those promoted to the rank of vizierate (Ağa Paşa) were considered to be members of the council.

23 Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî, 973-1033/1563-1595*, ed. Mehmet İpşirli, 2 vols., Istanbul 1989, I, p. 424. In the case mentioned by the author, the janissary ağa, Hasan Ağa, preferred to pass the winter in the capital rather than Rumelia. He was then allowed to return to the capital (evahir-i R 1003/2-11 February 1595).

24 Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, pp. 196-97. The author also notes that when a kul kethüda refused to attend the campaign he was sentenced to death by Süleyman I in 1542, but saved thanks to the help of some dignitaries.

25 Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, IX, p. 378; Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 198.

26 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil Military Relations*, Cambridge: London 1998, pp. 8-11.

agement of violence," and is exclusively responsible for the military security of society.[27] As Huntington observes, there are five important criteria to evaluate professionalism in a military system: the entry requirements for the officer corps, the means of advancement, the nature of military education, the nature of military staff system, and finally the general esprit and competence.[28] In contrast to some European and non-European counterparts, entry to the janissary corps was not defined by birth or wealth but by service in the palace and loyalty to the sultan. Until the seventeenth century, the *devshirme* system and training in the imperial household distinguished the possible candidates for the post of janissary ağas from civilians. Palace training and loyalty, as well as political networks, were the main factors for advancement within the corps: merit was not always the determining factor, and in this it resembles other examples from around the world. Practical education rather than a well-established schooling system was provided for the officers, and honor and courage were still very important.

A low level of professionalism and dependency on the sultan should not lead us to the misunderstanding that the ağas of the outer palace were unfamiliar with warfare and military skills. As *devshirme* recruits, they were all educated in the *enderun* (inner palace) and were provided with extensive training not only in arts and history but also in military skills.[29] The *mirahor-ı evvel* were court officials responsible for the imperial horses and stables, and were important figures in warfare. This office seems to have preserved its importance in most of the Islamic polities of the middle ages. *Miralem*s also served as commanders during campaigns in many Islamic states, and were commanders of the *mehterhane* (military band corps) and *alemdaran* (standard-bearers) forces. The *silahdar ağa*s' connection to the sultan and their expertise in weaponry seem to have made them good candidates for important positions, including certain commanderships.

With a low degree of professionalization, the distinction between military, administrative and palace positions is not clear-cut, and the classification of palace officers as courtiers and non-courtiers does not seem to have been as absolute as we may now imagine. In 14 Z 997/24 October 1589, for example, Sinan Ağa, a *sekbanbaşı*, was appointed as a *mirahor*.[30] On another occasion,

27 The duty of a military officer is to organize the equipment and training of his forces, and the planning and direction of an operation. Huntington, *Soldier and State*, pp. 11, 15-16.

28 Huntington, *Soldier and State*, p. 20.

29 İ. Metin Kunt, *Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of the Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650*, New York 1983, p. 47.

30 BOA, KK. d. 252, fl. 112.

Hüseyin Ağa, *saksoncubaşı* of the janissary corps, was appointed as the chief gate keeper (28 N 1029/29 August 1620).[31] Moreover, a considerable number of officers of the *birun*, including the janissary ağas, were appointed as provincial governors. Even though the administrative duties of provincial governors (including district governors) become more prominent in time, they were originally the highest military commanders of the regions to which they were appointed. *Beylerbey*s (governor-generals) were in fact commanders-in-chiefs of all the provincial troops as well as district governors, and were active commanders, especially those of Rumelia. It was only during the course of the fifteenth century that their administrative duties became more pronounced. Still, the military functions of the provincial governors continued to be an important part of their duties.[32]

The appointment of janissary ağas to a very high-ranking military-administrative function directly and without any previous experience still stands out as a problem. More curious still is the fact that the local janissary ağas of different districts of provinces were not included in the promotions within the central janissary army, whereby they could gain more experience. On the other hand, the custom of appointing the janissary ağas from the dignitaries of the imperial court certainly harmed not only professionalism but also the principles of seniority and meritocracy within the internal hierarchy of the corps, by reserving the positions of highest authority within the janissary army to people without a janissary background. Indeed, d'Ohsson argues that the appointment of a civilian over a turbulent military force was somewhat inconvenient, and thus Murad III (r. 1574-1595) revived the old practice in which the *sekbanbaşı* or *kul kethüda* became the highest commander of the janissary corps.[33] There may have been such an intention on the part of Murad III, yet to my knowledge no such rule was implemented in 1582.[34]

On the other hand, appointment from the imperial household did increase the importance of the janissary ağas from the sixteenth century onwards. They were able to keep larger retinues and households.[35] During the period under

31 BOA, A. RSK.d. 1484, fl. 181.

32 Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, pp. 14, 26.

33 D'Ohsson, *Tableau Géneral de l'Empire Othoman*, VII, p. 314.

34 There are two ağas who occupied the post in 1580s and both were *birun* officers: Ferhad Ağa Paşa served as the janissary ağa from 2 S 990/26 February 1582 to 3 Z 990/29 December 1582 and he was promoted from the ranks of *kapıcıbaşı*, and then *mirahor-ı evvel*, to the position of janissary ağa. His successor, Payzen Frenk Yusuf Ağa, held the post of *miralem* before his appointment.

35 The personal retinue of the ağa was called the "ağa gediklileri": birinci mehter, ikinci mehter, üçüncü mehter, baş mehter, saraç, çuhadar, matracı, camadancı, tüfekçi,

study, their chances of still higher promotions also increased considerably. For this period (the second decade of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century), out of 61 janissary ağas of this group, 19 were directly promoted to the position of *beylerbey* (governor-general) of Rumelia, while others were appointed to other provinces. Twelve of them later became grand viziers, though none, to my knowledge, was directly promoted to that position. On the other hand, three janissary ağas were directly promoted to the grand admiralship (see Table 18.1).[36] The career pattern for a considerable number of these involved promotion to the rank of *beylerbey*, particularly that of Rumelia, then to the grand admiralship, and then, where possible, the post of grand vizirate. A contemporary historian notes that the rank of janissary ağa was equal to that of *mirimiran* (major-general).[37]

As we move to the last quarter of the sixteenth century, there seems to be a loosening of the dependency of janissary ağas on the person of the sultan. According to traditional accounts, after the siege of Yanık (1594), janissary ağas began to lead the army even where the sultan did not personally participate in the campaign. During this siege, Lala Mehmed Paşa, the ağa of the janissaries, joined the forces of grand vizier Sinan Paşa as the commander of eighteen thousand janissaries.[38] The author of *Kitâb-ı Müstetâb* complains about this practice, but does not explain why. He does not specifically mention the Yanık campaign, but notes that over the last twenty-five years, and during the reign of Murad III, the janissary ağas had begun to attend the campaigns whether the sultan participated or not:

> Up until the early reign of His Majesty Sultan Murad Khan, it was not customary for the sipâhis, silahdârs and the janissary ağas to go on military campaign with the viziers unless our Great Sultan did so. Such had

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bayraktar, tuğcu, 3 mumcu, 4 kündereci. His clerks (such as the kethüda yeri katibi) at Ağa Kapısı performed the scribal duties. Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, pp. 181-82.

36 Müezzinzâde Ali Ağa (15 C 974/28 December 1566), Koca Türk Ahmed Ağa (6 Za 1012/6 April 1604), and Maraşlı Halil Ağa (11 Za 1017/16 February 1609) were directly appointed as grand admirals.

37 *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, II, p. 93: "Mezburun tariki, külli riayet olunduğu takdirce Rumeli beylerbeyliği ve veyahut kapıdanlıktır."

38 Peçevi İbrahim, *Tarih*, 2 vols., Istanbul: 1285/1868-69, II, p. 145. This is a fact repeated by later narratives such as Hasan Beyzâde Ahmed Paşa, *Hasan Beyzâde Tarihi*, ed. Ş. Nezihi Aykut, 3 vols, Ankara 2004, II, pp. 319, 390. Naima notes that the old law books stated that previously no janissary ağas had participated in wars independently of the presence of the sultan. Naima Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Naima*, ed. Mehmed İpşirli, 4 vols., Ankara 2007, I, p. 63.

> never been precedented thus far, and wherever our Sultan was, they were always together with him as companions. However, in the present case, from the time of His Majesty the late Sultan Murad Khan, that is, for over twenty-five years; the Law of the House of Osman (Kânûn-ı Âl-i Osmân) was corrupted: A new practice was devised for the sipâhis, silahdârs and later on the Janissary aghas to go on military campaign with the viziers. Thus, what is now left for our Sultan in Constantinople?[39]

It later became an established pattern that the janissary ağas regularly led the sultan's armies during times of warfare, even when the sultan personally did not join the troops.[40] Another important development of the late sixteenth century was the change in the appointment procedures of the janissary ağa. Previously, dismissals and appointments of the janissary ağas were done directly by the sultan himself, but after that period the grand viziers seem to have taken more initiative in this regard. No direct reason for that crucial change is mentioned in the contemporary accounts. It generally reflected a personal decision of Grand Vizier Sinan Paşa. During the Ottoman–Austrian war of 1593-1606, he dismissed Lala Mehmed Ağa and appointed Yemişçi Hasan as the new janissary ağa, leaving Murad IIII no option but to approve the decision. According to one narrative, the sultan was not pleased with the decision and cursed the paşa for his initiative.[41] From that time onwards, appointment

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39 "Sultan Murad Han hazretlerinin evâ'iline gelinceye değin sipâhi ve silahdâr ve Yeniçeri ağası mâdâm ki sa'âdetlü pâdişahımız sefere varmıya bunlar vüzerâ ile sefere varmaları kanun değildir ve kat'a olugelmemiştir. Heman pâdişâhımız kande ise bunlar dahî ândadur, kafâdârlardır. Şimdiki hâl müşarûn-ileyh merhum Sultan Murâd Hân hazretlerinin zamanından berü yirmi beş yıldan mütecavizdir ki kanun-ı Âl-i Osmân bozulup sipâhî ve silahdâr ve ba'dehu Yeniçeri ağası vüzerâ ile sefere varılmağa ihdâs olundu. Bu takdirce ayruk İstanbul'da pâdişâhımıza ne kalmış olur." Yaşar Yücel (ed.), *Osmanlı Devlet Düzenine Ait Metinler 1: Kitab-ı Müstetab*, Ankara 1974, p. 17. This is a seventeenth-century source of advice literature by an anonymous author.

40 According to Marsilli, the janissaries began to attend campaigns during the reign of Süleyman I. Graf Marsilli, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'unun Zuhur ve Terakkisinin İnhitatı Zamanına Kadar Askeri Vaziyeti*, translated into Turkish by M. Kaymakam Nazmi, Ankara 1934, p. 71. See also Ahmed Cevad Paşa, *Tarih-i Askerî-i Osmanî*, 2 vols. Istanbul 1884, I, p. 2.

41 Faris Çerçi, *Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali ve Künhü'l-Ahbar'ında II. Selim, III. Murad ve III. Mehmed Devirleri*, 3 vols., Kayseri 2000, III, p. 595: "Ol mahall niçe benim 'arzıma noksân verdi ise Allahü Te'âlâ anın 'arzını yıksun." In fact the same author does not mention any specific reason for the dismissal of Mehmed Ağa other than his being Bosnian in origin. In *Eyyubi Efendi Kanunnamesi*, this is repeated in almost the same words on p. 41: "This new law was an innovation by Sinan Paşa. It is even related that, when he was informed of the situation, the Sultan said 'may his honor be soon destroyed, just as he defames the

of the ağas was still subject to the sultan's approval, but in most cases this remained as a formality. In fact, these appointments may have become the personal gift of the grand vizier, but this certainly did not show that there was corruption in the military system. It points more to the rising importance of the janissary army in warfare, and more importantly to the gradual abandonment of the image of the "warrior sultan."

It seems that not only the contemporary historians but also the ordinary janissary soldiers had difficulties coping with this transformation – that is, the weakening of the warrior image of the sultans and their loosened connections with their own. For instance, in C 1002/February-March 1594, the janissaries did not want to fight under the commandership of the grand vizier unless the sultan led them.[42] During the Long War, the janissaries opposed the idea of going on the Budin campaign for exactly the same reason. Remonstrating with janissary ağa Yemişçi Hasan, the soldiers argued that Süleyman I had led his army despite his old age, and they could not now understand the reluctance of the young sultan to do the same (23 M 1004/28 September 1595). The next day, in accordance to their custom, they did not drink soup and swore not to go the campaign. When Yemişçi Hasan Ağa later insisted on their participation in the campaign, they reacted by saying that contrary to the established principles he had been twice employed as their commander.[43]

Second Period (1613-1704)

The period from the early sixteenth and to the early seventeenth century witnessed crucial changes in the promotion system within the janissary corps. We can call this period a transitional one because even though recruitment from the imperial palace still continued, there were also some ağas chosen from the janissary corps itself. As the corps became more professionalized, the role of the janissary ağas in executive and administrative duties decreased sharply. In sharp contrast to the first period, a considerable number of the ağas were recruited from the corps.

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honor of the Sublime State and that lofty office." Historian Selânikî does not mention any specific details regarding this unusal dismissal; he simply incudes the dismissal among the news from the imperial army (Selânikî, I, pp. 384, 390). See also Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 186.

42 Selânikî, I, 355.

43 Selânikî, II, p. 524. There was a similar reaction, this time from the public, during a Friday sermon (p. 525). For a council on the sultan's leading the campaign, see p. 548.

According to Uzunçarşılı, the custom of appointment of janissary ağas from the *birun* ağas started during the reign of Bayezid II and continued until 1641. With few exceptions, he argues, most of the ağas were chosen from the imperial household.[44] Actually, recruitment of the ağas from the corps seems to have started earlier than 1641. Öztuna, indeed, provides an earlier date: for him, the first janissary ağa recruited from the rank-and-file of the army was Sülün/Süklün Mustafa Ağa.[45] Actually, my own research proves that there was indeed one Mustafa Ağa around this period who was a *kapıcıbaşı* and later served as janissary ağa (1613).[46] I am not sure whether he was the same person referred to by Öztuna, but he was certainly not a graduate of the rank-and-file of the janissary army. Actually, it was Çeşteci Ali who rose to the post of janissary ağa from the traditional internal hierarchy of the corps, first serving as *zağarcıbaşı* and then *kul kethüda*.[47] Therefore, he should be identified as the first janissary ağa to be recruited from the rank-and-file. His promotion reflects the established promotion patterns of the subsequent years. During the period under scrutiny, at least 28 ağas rose to the post of commander from the traditional regular internal hierarchy of the janissary corps.[48]

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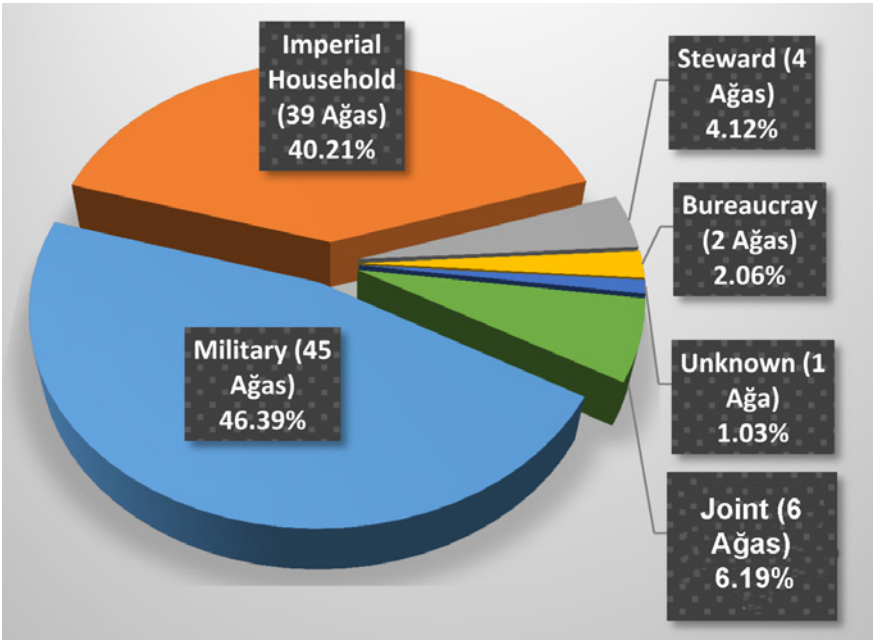
44 Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 164. See also Uyar & Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, p. 38.

45 Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, II, p. 981. Little information remains regarding his life and career. It seems that he was *sipahiler ağası*, later appointed as *mirahor*, and then was employed as a janissary ağa. See also Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill*, VI, p. 1765. These authors do not provide his former career or the exact dates of his appointment or dismissal.

46 He served as janissary ağa from 1 Ca 1022/19 June 1613 to 23 Ş 1022/8 October 1613.

47 Çeşteci Ali Ağa was appointed in M 1032/November-December 1622 and dismissed on 10 Z 1032/5 October 1623.

48 Çeşteci Ali Ağa (zağarcıbaşı-kul kethüda); Bayram Çelebi Ağa Paşa (sakabaşı in Hotin-turnacıbaşı- zağarcıbaşı- kul kethüda); Köse Mehmed Ağa (kul kethüda); Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Ağa (solak- kul kethüda- sekbanbaşı); Küçük Hasan Ağa (kul kethüda-sekbanbaşı); Bektaş Ağa (odabaşı- çorbacı- kul kethüda-, sekbanbaşı); Kara Dev Murad Ağa (zağarcıbaşı-kul-kethüda-ex-sekbanbaşı); Kara Hasan Ağazâde Hüseyin Ağa (ex-kul kethüda-sekbanbaşı); Mehmed Ağa (saksoncubaşı- kul kethüda-sekbanbaşı); Mustafa Ağa (kul kethüda); Arnavud Uzun İbrahim Ağa Paşa (zağarcıbaşı-kul kethüda); Abdi Ağa Paşa (kul kethüda); Abdurrahman Ağa Paşa (kul kethüda); Kara Hasanzâde Mustafa Ağa (kul kethüda- sekbanbaşı); Çelebi İbrahim Ağa Paşa (kul kethüda); Tekfurdağlı Bekri Mustafa Ağa Paşa (ex-kul kethüda- sekbanbaşı); Hacı Zülfikar Ağa Paşa (asesbaşı- kul kethüda- ex-sekbanbaşı); Çolak Hasan Ağa (ex-kul kethüda); Cadı Yusuf Ağa (zağarcıbaşı-kul kethüda); Harputlu Hacı Ali Ağa (turnacı-sekbanbaşı); Koca Mahmud Ağa Paşa (devşirme ağası-asesbaşı-kul kethüda-sekbanbaşı); Eğinli Mehmed Ağa (zağarcıbaşı-kul kethüdası); Deli Baltazâde Mahmud Ağa (ex kul kethüda, sekbanbaşı); Kürd İbrahim Ağa (zağarcıbaşı-kul kethüda); Doğramacızâde Mehmed Ağa (ex kul kethüda,-sekbanbaşı); Arnavud


Imperial Household (39 Ağas) 40.21%
Steward (4 Ağas) 4.12%
Bureaucray (2 Ağas) 2.06%
Unknown (1 Ağa) 1.03%
Joint (6 Ağas) 6.19%
Military (45 Ağas) 46.39%

GRAPH 18.2 *Career Distribution 1613-1704*

Ninety-seven janissary ağas served during the second period. As may also observed from the graph 18.2, from this number, 45 (46.39%) were recruited from a military background and 39 (40.21%) from the *üzengi ağas*, i.e. from the imperial household. Another group which rose to be candidates for promotion to the commandership of the janissary troops is the stewards of certain dignitaries (4, corresponding to 4.12 %), while some had joint careers.[49] The career of Arabacı Ali Ağa (Paşa) is worth mentioning here. Ali Ağa was from Ohri and seems to have served as steward (*naib*) to the judges for some time. After serving in the household of Kara Ibrahim Paşa, the grand vizier, he became a protegeé and a steward (*kethüda*) to a member of Köprülü family, Fazıl Mustafa Paşa, while the paşa was the guardian of Sakız (Chios) and Hanya (Chania). Following the appointment of Fazıl Mustafa Paşa as grand vizier (25.10.1689),

Osman Ağa Paşa (zağarcıbaşı-kul kethüda); Elhac Çalık Ahmed Ağa (zağarcıbaşı-ex-kul kethüda-sekbanbaşı); Çelebi Mehmed Ağa (ex-kul kethüda- ex-sekbanbaşı).

49 Hacı Evhad Süleyman Ağa; Çikoğlu Mehmed Ağa (steward to Köprülü family); Karagöz Mehmed Ağa (steward to Kara Mustafa Paşa); Salih Ağa (silahdar and steward to Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Paşa); Muharrem Ağa (steward to Siyavuş Paşa); Arabacı Ali Ağa (steward to Köprülü Fazıl Mustafa Paşa), Boşnak Hasan Paşa (steward to Kalaylı Ahmed Paşa).

Ali Ağa benefited from his affiliations. He was appointed as the janissary ağa on 15 Ş 1101/24 May 1690 and remained in office until 2 Ş 1102/1 May 1691. He was promoted to the position of *rikab-ı hümayun kaimmakam* (deputy of the grand vizier) and then vizier of second rank. He attained the post of grand vizirate on 19.8.1691 until his dismissal on 27.03.1692.[50] Household affiliation and networks were good assets for promotion during this period.

The insertion of servants from the private households of dignitaries into the promotion structures of the corps cannot be explained as mere coincidence. The seventeenth century is the period of the rise of the households of dignitaries, especially with the end of the *devşirme* recruitment. Thereafter not only did the patron–client system rise in importance, but at the same time the servants of dignitaries were promoted to some important posts. Indeed, Metin Kunt also argues that service to private households became a good alternative to service in the imperial household during the seventeenth century, though he is specifically talking about appointments to provincial governorships.[51] Overall, however, the same century saw the virtual monopoly of court members in appointments, and the rise of an alternative group of statesmen "attached to vezir and paşa *kapilari*/households."[52]

On the other hand, the role of the military establishment in the administration declined. The socio-political instability of the seventeenth century decreased the possibility of the ağas being promoted to higher ranks. A considerable number of the ağas of this period were either banished, retired or appointed to governorships of less important provinces or districts (such as Malatya, Kanije, Sivas, Seddü'l-Bahir, Boğazhisar, Niğbolu), or became the guardians of certain regions such as Özi. Though his study of the professional background of the central and provincial administrators is restricted to a period of twenty years (1683-1703), Abou-El-Haj also observes that the military establishment was "down-graded as a source of staffing posts in the central government and in the provinces taking a little over 20 percent in the central and about 16 percent of the governorates."[53] The data he presents in his table of appointments to the central administration shows that between 1683 and 1703, from a total of 26 janissary ağas who came to power, six were stewards,

50 Özcan, *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi*, pp. 11, 37; Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Zeyl-i Fezleke (1065.22 Ca 1106/1654-7 Şubat 1695, Tahlil ve Metin*, Nazire Karaçay Türkal (ed.) unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Marmara University 2012), p. 1352. See also Mehmed Arslan (ed.), *Osmanlı Sadrazamları: Hadikatü'l-Vüzera ve Zeylleri*, Istanbul 2013, p. 127.

51 Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, p. 65,

52 Rıfaat Ali Abou-El-Haj, "The Ottoman Vezir and Paşa Households, 1683-1703: A Preliminary Report", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 94/4 (1974), p. 439.

53 Abou-El-Haj, "Paşa Households," p. 442.

five were graduates of the palace and fifteen were from the military establishment. His observation also confirms our conclusion that there was a decline in the janissary ağas' role in the provincial and central administration. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, duration in office became shorter while the intervals out of office increased at district level.[54] Appointments from outside, including the military establishment, had therefore become much more limited.

From 1690s onwards, the number of ağas chosen from the janissary army sharply increases, and in the 1700s ağas promoted from the imperial court become rare. Several contemporary historians were quick to notice the change, observing a breakdown of the monopoly of the imperial household over the promotions of the janissary ağas. Hasan Beyzâde, for instance, considers it a sign of corruption among the ruling elite, especially manifesting bribery and a deviation from the established customs of Süleyman I, when the post of janissary ağa was reserved for the *mirahor* and *kapıcıbaşı*s. Idealizing the reign of the late sultan, the author argues that, contrary to the old practices, the post was once given to a *çavuşbaşı* (referring to Ali Ağa),[55] and then to a *bölük ağası* (Halil Ağa).[56] For him this was an absolute contravention of the established rules and a sign of degeneration.[57] Referring to the appointment of Halil Ağa, he criticizes the promotions of the janissary ağas from outside the imperial household and complains that meritocracy was ignored for the sake of personal interests and, of course, because of bribery.[58] According an anonymous author of the early seventeenth century, the ideal promotion pattern was for the *devşirme* levies to be promoted to higher ranks, including the commandership of the janissary army. A *devşirme* trained in the palace would gradually climb to different offices, and then even could become a grand vizier, thus in

54 Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, pp. 70-76.

55 Ali Ağa was janissary ağa from 12 Ra 1036/1 December 1626 to 20 L 1036/4 July 1627. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find details of his former career, but it is certain that he was a *Çavuşbaşı* before his appointment. The Çavuşbaşı was the head of imperial couriers but it also denotes a rank of the janissary corps. In the case of Ali Ağa it probably refers to the Çavuşbaşı of the corps. BOA, KK. d. 265, fl. 12; Peçevi, II, 407; Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, p. 773.

56 Demirkazık Halil Ağa (ağa from 20 L 1036/4 July 1627 to 16 R 1038/13 December 1628) was a servant of ağa of the Darüssade. He previously served as *bölük ağa*, *sipahiler ağası*, and then *ebna-yı sipahiyan ağası* (commander of the cavalry forces of the central army), and his last position before his appointment as the janissary ağa was *süvari mukabelecisi* (chief of the palace cavalry salary bureau).

57 Hasan Beyzâde, III, p. 995.

58 Hasan Beyzâde, III, p. 995. See also Naima, II, p. 610.

this way he would be experienced in different posts and more acquainted with the conditions of the palace, provinces and military establishment. At each stage, officers would be checked and promoted to a higher position if they deserved it. In the same way, the author argues, a janissary ağa would be trained since his youth in the army, in the palace, and in various provincial posts. Becoming more mature and experienced in governmental and military issues, he thus would have no difficulty in administering the empire when appointed as a vizier. For the author, therefore, wider experience was better than the narrow professionalization that had begun to be practiced during this period.[59]

Even a later historian, Ahmed Cevad, considers the appointment of the janissary ağas from within the corps hierarchy to be a result of the degeneration of the janissary army. For him, due to these changes, the janissaries were now able to control the promotion system and exert pressure on the center to promote their own candidates.[60] But in fact these are very rare cases, not frequent enough to generalize from as the author does. In fact, in some cases the soldiers did not accept their ağas, and argued that their ağas should be appointed from the palace officials. For instance, the appointment of sekbanbaşı Mehmed Ağa as the new janissary ağa was refused due to the fact that he was from the rank-and-file of the janissary army. Because of this, Mehmed was dismissed the following day and Çukadar Boşnak Mahmud Ağa – from the imperial household – replaced him.[61] On M 1033/October-November 1623, the janissary *odabaşı*s (chiefs of the barrack-room) demanded the dismissal of the janissary ağa on the pretext that he had been recruited from within the corps. Following this incident, Bayram Ağa was dismissed and Hüsrev Ağa appointed

59 For the author the ideal ancient promotion system was as follows: the devshirmes who had trained in the palace, depending on their talents, would become *silahdar*, *çukadar*, *rikabdar*, and then be appointed as commander of one of the ağa regiments. Thereafter, they would appointed as *mirahor*, *kapıcıbaşı*, *mirialem*, and janissary ağa, then governor of the sancak of Kastamonu, followed by beylerbeylik of Anatolia and then of Rumelia, and then vizier and finally grand vizier. On the immediately following page, he introduces the chief gardeners in his list before promotion to *üzengi ağa*s. Even though the author reflects this promotion pattern as stipulated in old law books, it may be noted that it does not fit perfectly into that of earlier periods, especially regarding the appointment to the Kastamonu *sancak beylik* and inclusion of the chief gardeners. For the author, however, this was best strategy to train educated statesmen, prevent bribery, and to ensure the loyalty of the governors. *Kitab-ı Müstetâb*, pp. 6, 8.

60 Ahmed Cevad, *Tarih-i Askerî-i Osmanî*, I, p. 18.

61 Ases Damadı Mehmed Ağa (ağa from 7 C 1066/2 April 1656 to 8 C 1066/3 April 1656) was a former *asesbaşı* (night guard), *saksoncubaşı*, and the kul kethüda. He was later dismissed from this position to be appointed as *sekbanbaşı* (Ca 1063/March-April 1653). Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, p. 39. See also Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 178.

instead (M 1033/October-November 1623).[62] But despite some complaints and reactions, recruitment of the janissary ağas from the corps gradually became established, especially at the end of seventeenth century.

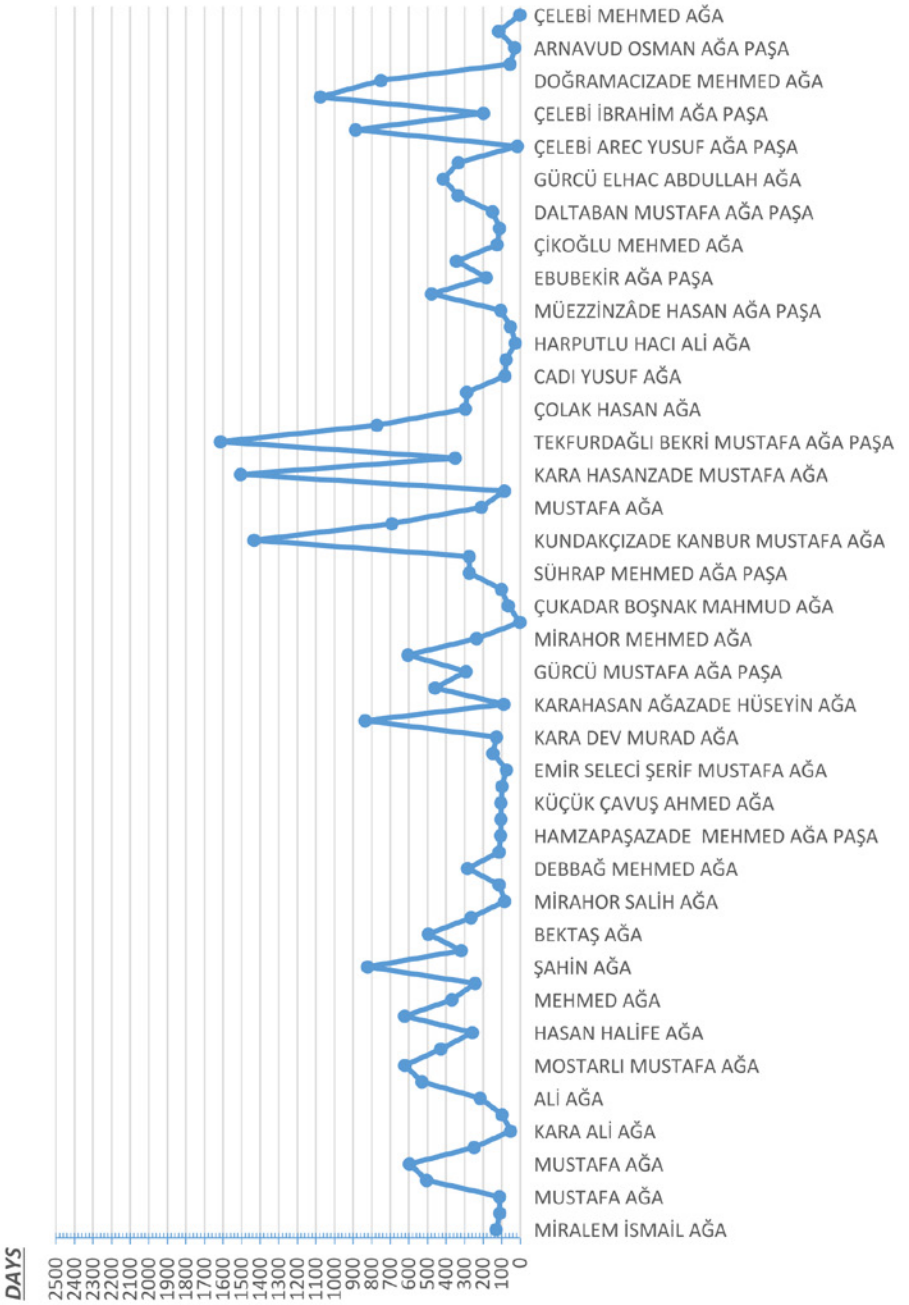
Before that time, too, subordinates were already being recruited from the janissary army. Given the non-existence of a separate military school for the military officers, they were trained in military ranks and promoted in accordance to their talents and seniority. During the first period, the subordinates of a janissary ağa did not have any chance of becoming a janissary ağa, while during the second and third period it was more likely. The janissary army itself was in fact composed of three different units which were merged in different times: *sekban* regiments, ağa regiments, and *yayabaşı* regiments. The bodies of these regiments evolved to become the general hierarchy of the whole janissary army:[63] *kul kethüda* (from ağa regiments); *zağarcıbaşı* (from *sekban* regiments); *saksoncubaşı* (from *sekban* regiments); *turnacıbaşı* (from *sekban* regiments); *muhzırbaşı* (from ağa regiments). The military officers from the rank of *kul kethüda* to that of *kethüda yeri* were called *katar ağaları* (commanders of the convoy) and they were the members of the council of the janissary army. Promotions to higher ranks, including the janissary ağas, were made from the ranks of the *katar ağas*. Appointments of subordinates of the janissary officers, including the *katar ağa*s, were made upon the writ of the janissary ağa. It was, at least in theory, a linear promotion pattern.[64] Yet in practice different cases were possible. Even where the second in command was the *sekbanbaşı*, he does not always seem to have been in the list of promotions from the rank and file. It was usually the *kul kethüda* who was appointed to the post of *sekbanbaşı*.[65] Again, it was more likely that a *kul kethüda* would be appointed as the janissary ağa, though sometimes a *zağarcıbaşı* or some other official would be appointed

62 Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, p. 722.

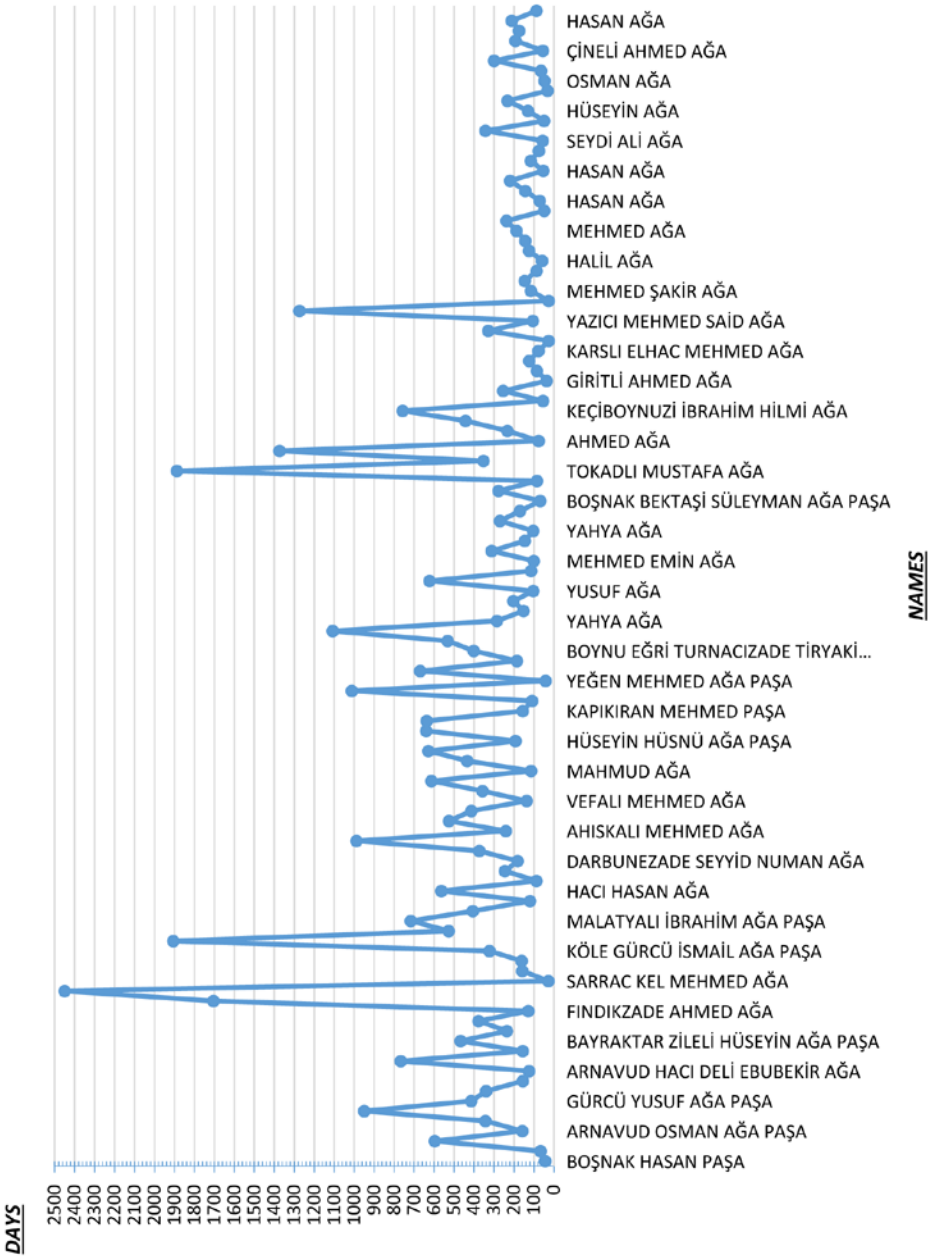
63 The rank-and-file of the *sekban* regiments are as follows: *sekbanbaşı*, *zağarcıbaşı*, *saksoncubaşı*, *turnacıbaşı*, *baş haseki*, *baş deveci*, *yayabaşı*. That of the ağa regiments: *kul kethüda*, *başçavuş*, *muhzırbaşı*, *kethüda yeri*, *bölükbaşı*. Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, p. 174.

64 I borrowed the term from Uyar & Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, p. 41.

65 There are many examples of the appointment of a *kul kethüda* to the post of *sekbanbaşı*. To give just two examples, kul kethüda Mustafa (sekbanbaşı in 1607) and Burunsuz Ahmed Paşa (*sekbanbaşı* first in 1676-77 and then in 1682) were both promoted to post of *sekbanbaşı* from kul kethüda-ship but neither later became janissary ağa. Ziya Yılmazer (ed.), *Topçular Katibi Abdülkadir* (*Kadri*) *Efendi Tarihi, Metin ve Tahlil*, 2 vols., Ankara 2003, I, p. 494; Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, p. 1019. Sometimes *zağarcıbaşı*s were promoted to the same position: Zağarcıbaşı Arif Ağa, for instance, became *sekbanbaşı* on 8 Za 1221/17 January 1807 (BOA, Sadaret defterleri, no. 357, fl. 24).



GRAPH 18.3 *Length of Service of Officers (1575-1704). Only the exact dates of appointment and dismissal are included.*



GRAPH 18.4 *Length of Service of Officers (1705-1826). Only the exact dates of appointment and dismissal are included.*

due to various reasons. Not only military positions but also some governmental positions were open to the lower rank-and-file of the corps. Though not very frequently, they were sometimes promoted to certain administrative or governmental posts.[66] There were no formal regulations restricting the terms of office at any rank, nor regarding further advancement.

During the second period there is a striking increase in the number of janissary ağas, which may be explained partly by the increased frequency of dismissals and appointments: from 1613 to 1704, covering 91 years, 97 ağas were appointed.

In the former period (1515-1612), during the course of 97 years 61 janissary ağas were employed, while for the last period (1705-1826) 137 ağas were appointed, covering a period of 121 years. The duration of the last period is close to 11 months (344 days). For the first period, the average term of office is close to 1.5 years (520 days), ranging from 4 years to 17 days. The average for the second period (1613-1704) is 11 months (326 days).

Why is there such a difference? Evidently this is related to the general air of crisis and instability which characterized the seventeenth century. As far as the janissary corps is concerned, this period witnessed frequent uprisings, during which some of the ağas were either murdered by rebellious soldiers or subsequently dismissed or executed due to their failure to suppress them.[67]

In comparison to the first period, the second and third periods were much more turbulent. To my knowledge, apart from the aforementioned Balyemez Osman Ağa, Ferhad Ağa was dismissed because of the clash between the *sipahi* and the janissaries during the imperial festival (3 Z 990/29 December 1582).[68] On the other hand, during the seventeenth century there are numerous exam-

66 Some examples are as follows: kul kethüda Çelebi İsmail Ağa as was appointed as the governor of Köstendil (8 Z 1095/16 November 1684) (Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, p. 919); kul kethüda Mehmed Ağa became the guardian of Pançova and the governor of Maraş (24 M 1106/14 September 1694) (Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, p. 1562); kul kethüda Bektaş Ağa was appointed as the guardian of Baghdad (20 Ş 1048/27 December 1638) (Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, p. 897). Kul kethüda Osman Ağa obtained the rank of mirimiran (1237/1822) (Sahhaflar Şeyhizâde Mehmed Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi* (*Bahir Efendi'nin Zeyl ve İlaveleriyle* (*1237/1241-1821-1826*), ed. Ziya Yılmazer, Istanbul 2000, p. 67). Zağarcıbaşı Şahin Mehmed Ağa became the governor-general of Rumelia (BOA, A. DVN.SNŞT.d. 2, fl. 25). Kul kethüda Mehmed Ağa was appointed as the governor of Mezestre (8 N 1106/22 April 1695), (BOA, MAD 18551, fl. 14).

67 The contemporary sources do not always provide details of the reasons for the dismissals: they are just noted as having been dismissed. Unfortunately I could find the reasons for dismissal for only around 37 ağas.

68 Peçevi, II, pp. 72-73.

ples of the dismissals of ağas, for a variety of causes. As in the case of the first period, unruly behavior among the soldiers could be a reason for a dismissal. Miralem İsmail Ağa was dismissed due to the unruly behavior of the soldiers in the imperial council.[69] Yet pressure exerted by the janissaries also became a determining factor for dismissals during the second period. Apostol Mahmud Ağa, much disliked by the janissaries, was dismissed after his own soldiers displayed their reluctance to accept him as their commander.[70] Satırcı Mehmed has a different story: due to oppression by the janissaries stationed in Erzurum, the residents of that city first complained to the center, and then began to attack the janissaries directly. This time the janissaries refused to drink their soup, signalling that they were ready to revolt. As soon as the sultan heard the news, he dismissed the janissary ağa (21 C 1000/4 April 1592).[71] Yemişçi Hasan Paşa was dismissed due to problems that occurred during the ceremony of the payment of the salaries of soldiers in the borderlands. He was appointed as the governor of Revan and replaced by Veli Ağa, the head gate keeper (4 C 1004/4 February 1596).[72] Derviş Ali Ağa was dismissed at the request of the janissaries.[73]

Increased dismissals were also related to the increased number of upheavals during the seventeenth century. During the 1622 revolt, which ended in the dethronement and regicide of Osman II, for instance, Kara Ali Ağa was murdered.[74] The turbulent years of 1630s also witnessed the murder or execution of two successive janissary ağas, namely Hasan Halife and Köse Mehmed Ağa.[75]

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69 He was appointed on 28 Ş 1021/24 October 1612 and dismissed in 1613. Topçular Katibi, I, p. 612.

70 Apostol Mahmud Ağa was appointed as the janissary ağa on 24 C 997/10 May 1589 and dismissed in 1590. But he was immediately promoted to the governorship of Rumelia. He was nicknamed 'Apostol' by his soldiers, meaning 'fey'. Selânikî, I, pp. 220-21, 231.

71 Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 220; Selânikî, I, 264.

72 Selânikî, II, p. 553; Topçular Katibi, I, p. 97.

73 Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, p. 693. The main reason seems to have been a conflict of interest between Derviş Ağa and *kollukçu*s.

74 Kara Ali Ağa served as the janissary ağa from 8 B 1031/19 May 1622 to 29 Ş 1031/9 July 1622. He was trained in the janissary corps and it seems that the soldiers did not like him while he was employed as *çavuş* and *kul kethüda*. In fact he did not support the rebels when the revolt started; therefore, when the rebels heard that Osman II had appointed him as the new ağa, they supposed that it was a ruse by the sultan to kill them all. Later he was sent to the residents of the janissaries to convince the rebels to accept Osman II as their sultan again. Later he was murdered by the rebels while he was trying to convince them to not to kill the deposed sultan. Naima, II, 484-85; Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, pp. 681-82.

75 Hasan Halife (ağa from 29 Ra 1041/25 October 1631 to 20 Z 1041/8 July 1632). Köse Mehmed Ağa (ağa from 20 Z 1041/8 July 1632 to 21 N 1043/21 March 1634).

During the reign of Murad IV (r. 1623-1640), the janissaries and *sipahi*s revolted, demanding the heads of certain officials, including Hasan Halife who in the end lost his life despite the initial reluctance of the sultan to deliver him and the others.[76] The new ağa, Köse Mehmed, seems to have remained loyal to the sultan and was backed by his own soldiers. Köse Mehmed Ağa himself fell victim to another uprising, this time in the imperial camp around Aleppo (22 Ş 1043/21 February 1634). He was able to survive this mutiny, but was executed on his return to the capital upon the order of the sultan (21 N 1043/21 March 1634).[77] After the revolt of 1648, the janissaries emerged as the most powerful group among the military in the capital and the janissary officers became very influential in state affairs. This period is referred as the "sultanate of the ağas" and their dominance caused a revolt in 1651. With the help of the sheik-al-Islam, the artisans of the city demanded the execution of the janissary ağa. When the ordinary soldiers also supported the artisans the janissary officers were killed.[78] Mehmed Ağa and Çukadar Boşnak Mahmud Ağa lost their lives during the incidents of 1656. A delay in the payments of the janissaries' salaries had caused the revolt. After the revolt Mehmed Ağa and Osman Ağa ran away and hid to escape persecution. Both were later executed.[79]

The uprising which ended with Mehmed IV's deposition in 1686 was instrumental in the death of three janissary ağas, namely Cadı Yusuf, Harputlu Hacı Ali Ağa and Darbakçı Ali Ağa.[80] Yusuf Ağa was dismissed due to the pressure of the janissaries and *sipahi*s who requested accession money, the practice of distribution of substantial sums of money to the janissaries by a new sultan. He was replaced by Cerrah Mustafa Ağa. Later, during his visit to Mecca, he was brought to Jeddah where he was executed.[81] Following the appointment of Cerrah Mustafa as the governor of Tunisia, *sekbanbaşı* Harputlu Hacı Ali Ağa

76 Naima, II, pp. 708-10; Mehmed Halife, *Tarih-i Gılmani*, Ertuğrul Oral (ed.), unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Marmara University: 2000), p. 9; Ziya Yılmazer, "IV Murad," *DİA*, p. 178.

77 Naima, II, pp. 764-68. For more details on Köse Mehmed Ağa, his career and wealth, see Tarık Özçelik, "Yeniçeri Ağası Köse Mehmed Ağa ve Muhallefatı," *History Studies: International Journal of History* 5 (January 2013), pp. 287-310.

78 Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnaf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, unpublished M.A. thesis (Mcgill University: 1981), pp. 95-96.

79 Ziya Akkaya (ed.), *Vecihi Devri ve Eseri 1637-1661/1057-1071*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Ankara University 1957), pp. 133-37. See also Kafadar, *Janissary-Esnaf Relations*, p. 98.

80 Cadı Yusuf (ağa from 22 L 1098/31 August 1687 to 15 M 1099/21 November 1687); Harputlu Hacı Ali Ağa (ağa from 1 R 1099/4 February 1688 to 27 R 1099/1 March 1688); Darbakçı Ali Ağa (ağa from 27 R 1099/1 March 1688 to 20 C 1099/22 April 1688).

81 Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiât: Tahlil ve Metin*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan, Ankara 1995, pp. 169, 270, 310; Raşid Mehmed Efendi & Çelebizâde İsmail Asım Efendi,

was appointed as the janissary ağa (1 R 1099/4 February 1688). Yet his appointment was not welcomed by the leading figures of the janissary army, who said that they would not accept him since he was an Armenian in origin. They insisted on the reappointment of the former ağa. Yet when a prominent ringleader of the rebels was executed by the imperial court, the rebels decided to take revenge and murdered Ali Ağa as he was trying to calm them down.[82] The last uprising which took place during the second period is the 1703 Edirne Incident. Çalık Ahmed Ağa, an ex-*kul kethüda*, was executed during the uprising. In fact, Çalık Ahmed himself had been chosen by the rebels for that post and later had been promoted to the rank of vizier thanks to the help of the rebels. In the aftermath of the uprising he aspired to become grand vizier, but was appointed as governor of Rhodes and executed there.[83]

These uprisings, together with other disobedient acts by the janissaries, began to change the image of the janissaries from eternally victorious soldiers to a group of paramilitaries who were a cesspit of royal depositions and upheavals. Therefore, during that period and afterwards, their commanders were expected to prevent uprisings and never to collaborate with them. Indeed, loyalty and the ability to keep their soldiers in control became the most important criteria in their promotion and dismissals. I find this issue important, because contrary to our expectations, military success in wars is rarely mentioned as a criterion for promotion, while the ability to check the unruly and notorious janissaries is mentioned very frequently indeed, reflecting the deep suspicions about the corps.

Enumerating the expectations of a good janissary ağa, Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa asserts that he has to be prudent, loyal, and pious. After listing these personal traits he underlines that a janissary ağa has to supervise his army closely, and must keep the soldiers in order. As a final note, he adds that ağas should also be experienced in warfare and be aware of defense (entrenchment) techniques. But for him the most important role for the commanders of the janissary army was to reform the army in collaboration with other military officers.[84] By reform he means the end of abuses and bribery, and especially

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Tarih-i Raşid ve Zeyli, eds. Abdülkadir Özcan, Yunus Uğur, Baki Çakır and Ahmet Z. İzgöer, 3 vols., Istanbul 2013, I, p. 355.

82 Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, pp. 1115-1119; *Zübde-i Vekayiat*, p.275. Kul kethüda Ömer Ağa was also executed during the same incident.

83 Annemarike Stremmelaar, *Justice and Revenge in the Ottoman Rebellion of 1703*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Leiden University, 2007), pp. 55, 78, 85-86.

84 Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Devlet Adamlarına Öğütler: Osmanlılarda Devlet Düzeni/ Nesayihü'l-Vüzera ve'l-Ümera veya Kitab-ı Güldeste: Nizam-ı Devlete Müteallik bir Risale*, ed. Hüseyin Ragıp Uğural, Ankara 1969, pp. 67-68.

the exclusion of undeserving people from recruitment to the corps, which not only put an extra burden on the treasury but was turning the whole army into a para-military group. For Sarı Mehmed Paşa, appointing commanders from outside the janissary corps would not be effective. This in fact explains why he lays emphasis on religiosity and loyalty to the sultan, over and above an ağa's experience in warfare. Only such a person, marked by fear of God and obedience to the sultan, would refrain from any kind of abuse and try to bring order to his army. This criteria of being able to establish law and order (*zabt u rabta kadir olmak*) in fact never changed.[85]

The crucial criteria for advancement in this period thus turns out to be the ability of the ağas to control and dominate their soldiers. The increase in the quantity but decrease in quality of the troops made the janissary army the source of all kinds of rebellious acts, and the janissary army, the most important military group, became something that needed to be silenced and kept in check, especially from the seventeenth century onward. Therefore, their commanders were expected to prevent disobedience and remain loyal to the sultan, rather than cooperating with their own soldiers.

Last Period (1705-1826)

The general trend of the second period continued and became more established during the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The rapid bureaucratization of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of a kind of defensive modernization (especially in the military field) under the initiative of the bureaucrats not only further increased the negative attitude to the corps, but also made the janissary ağas an almost marginal group within the state apparatus. Promotion to higher positions was still possible, but mostly exceptional. It was rather the age of professional bureaucrats, who dominated most of the key positions in the central administration. It was this group within the Ottoman elite that undertook the modernization process. The increased military defeats and territorial losses encouraged them to question the existing military institutions and search for ways to either reform or abolish them.

85 For some examples in this regard, see BOA, HAT 1261/48792 (undated). BOA, HAT 1261/48825 (undated) explains the dismissal of a janissary ağa on the grounds that he was incapable of disciplining the soldiers and carrying out his threats ("zabt u rabt-ı neferata ve tehdidini ikaa muktedir olamayub"), BOA, HAT 1451/5 (24 M 1203/25 October 1788). This document is a very detailed account which tries to excuse the dismissal of Mehmed Emin Ağa on the grounds of his inability to discipline and establish his authority over his soldiers.

Because it was the most notorious group within the Ottoman military establishment, the janissary corps became subject to various reforms, until it was abolished by Mahmud II in 1826.

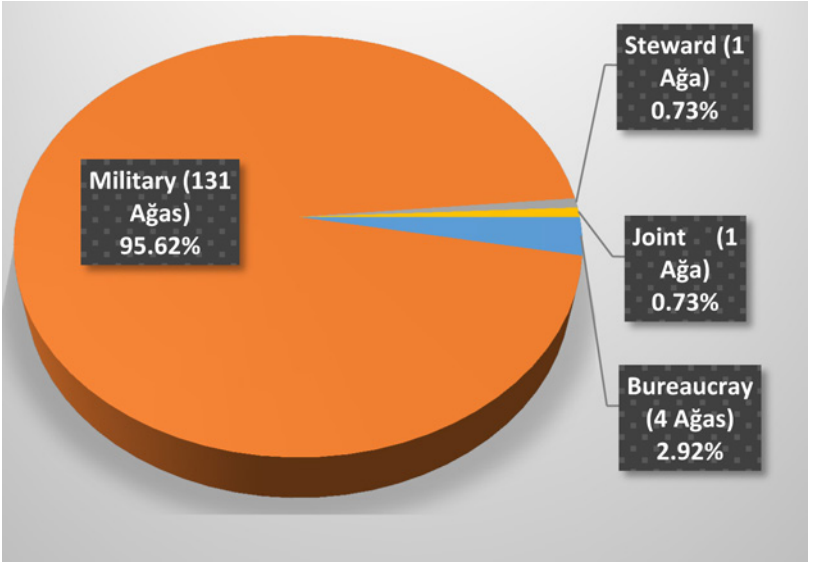
The modernizing bureaucratic elite of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century tried to solve the problems of the empire and so provide for its survival. Within this process the voices of the dignitaries of the military establishment were almost entirely absent, probably because they were considered to be as corrupt as their soldiers. Reform proposals penned during the reign of Selim III (r. 1789-1807) provide a very clear example of this. These proposals were written upon the order of the sultan to find some measures to revitalize the empire. No professional military officers are to be found among the statesmen who prepared these proposals, even though the basic issue was military reform.

All of the authors of the treaties acknowledge the corruption and degeneration of the military establishment, particularly the janissaries. Though they all agree on the corruption of the corps, there are very few allusions to the systemic problems. On the other hand, there are frequent accusations directed at the janissary officers, especially the ağas, such as the embezzlement of the salaries of the soldiers, and that they consider their duties simply as a source of revenue. Therefore, appointing the janissary ağas and their subordinates from among the "smart, hardworking" but also "loyal, pious, trustworthy" cadres was considered a means to restore the old glorious days of the janissary corps. Only these ağas would ensure obedience, loyalty and discipline among the janissaries. Appointing experienced officers as commanders was another criteria emphasized by the authors of the proposals. One of them even suggested returning to the old practice of appointing the ağas from the loyal *birun* officers.[86] On the other hand, another author argues in favor of linear promotions from inside the corps instead of appointing foreigners (*ecnebi*) to the corps.[87] One final measure for increasing the efficiency of the janissary ağas was to appoint them from the *serhad* ağas (ağa serving actively on the frontier), who were experienced in warfare, instead of automatic promotions within a short period of time.[88] There is also mention of the dangers of frequent dismissals, which was undermining the authority of the janissary ağas over the soldiers,

86 This is suggested by Aşir Efendi, an ex-kazasker of Rumelia ("efendimizin hayırhah ağalarından nasb"). Ahmet Öğreten (ed.), *Nizam-ı Cedid'e Dair Askeri Layihalar*, Istanbul 2014, p. 187.

87 This is suggested by Firdevsi Efendi, *Askeri Layihalar*, p. 189.

88 This is suggested by historian Enveri and he seems to have been a good source on the issue of experience of janissary military officers in warfare. *Askeri Layihalar*, pp. 189-190.



GRAPH 18.5 *Career Distribution 1705-1826*

even while the janissary officers were the ones responsible for order, obedience, and discipline in the corps.[89] In terms of systematic problems, the only reasonable point the authors made relates to the *caize* (honoraria) payments. According to one author, due to the high *caize*, the janissary ağas had to pay out immense amounts after their appointments, and in return they took high *caize* from their subordinates, and became involved in other illegal practices including open bribery. The abolition of this unjust practice was therefore an urgent necessity.[90]

As in Europe, bureaucracy became prominent in the eighteenth century and the military profession lost its popularity and importance. While the opportunities for bureaucrats to achieve higher promotions were increasing, for the military establishment they considerably decreased. Especially during the reign of Mahmud II, promotions even to minor administrative positions had almost stopped.

From the early eighteenth century until 1826, it is very clear that the rule of the promotion of ağas from the rank-and-file of the corps was firmly established. There are four members of the bureaucracy, including one scribe to the

89 *Askeri Layihalar*, pp. 165, 168, 177-78, 184.

90 This issue is especially emphasized in Mehmed Raşid Efendi, Hayrullah Efendi, Salihzâde Ahmed Esad Efendi, Enverî, Rasih Efendi. *Askeri Layihalar*, pp. 182-84, 187, 188, 189.

janissary corps, and one steward (Süleyman Ağa), among the 137 janissary ağas of this period, corresponding to 4.38 percent of the whole, while the remaining 95.62 percent are exclusively from the military establishment. There is no mention of promotions from the imperial court. This signifies a professionalization which was one of the basic characteristics of Mahmud II's time and subsequent reform periods; but at the same time it strongly suggests that the corps was falling from favor. From this group, there were four direct promotions to the rank of grand vizierate (Gürcü Yusuf Paşa, Ağa Hasan Paşa, Kalafat Mehmed Paşa, İbrahim Hilmi Paşa)[91] and three later appointments (Muhsinzâde Abdullah Paşa, Yeğen Mehmed Paşa, Köle İsmail Paşa).[92] Apart from these, five janissary ağas were promoted as governor-generals of Rumelia,[93] four as grand admirals,[94] and eight as *sadaret kaimmakam* (deputy grand vizier).[95] The remaining ones are usually appointments to districts or less important provinces. On the other hand, it seems that the ağas' military functions were becoming more important than the administrative ones during this period. For

91 Gürcü Yusuf Paşa was granted the rank of vizier while he was a janissary ağa (16 Ca 1123/2 July 1711). He served as grand vizier from 9 L 1123/20 November 1711 to 12 L 1124/12 November 1712. Ağa Hasan Paşa was granted the rank of vizier on 15 C 1156/6 August 1743 and then appointed as grand vizier on 4 Ş 1156/23 September 1743, to be dismissed on 21 B 1159/9 August 1746. Kalafat Mehmed Paşa was appointed to the same post on 8 Ş 1192/1 September 1778 and dismissed on 8 Ş 1193/21 August 1779. Keçiboynuzî İbrahim Hilmi Paşa was appointed as grand vizier on 1 B 1221/14 September 1806 and remained in the office until his dismissal on 11 R 1222/18 June 1807.

92 Muhsinzâde Abdullah Ağa Paşa served as grand vizier from 6 August 1737 to 19 December 1737. Yeğen Mehmed Ağa Paşa served as grand vizier from 16 N 1196/25 August 1782 to 25 M 1197/31 December 1782.

93 Köle Gürcü İsmail Paşa was directly appointed as the governor-general of Rumelia. (2 S 1145/25 July 1732). On the other hand, Muhsinzâde Abdullah Paşa, Macar Hacı Hasan Ağa, Ebubekir Ağa (Paşa) (11 Z 1196/17 November 1782) and Süleyman Paşa (12 L 1203/6 July 1789) were subsequently appointed to the same position.

94 Hüseyin Hüsnü Ağa Paşa (15 Ş 1178/7 February 1765) was appointed to the position with the rank of beylerbey of Rumelia. There were also three subsequent promotions: Tosun Mehmed Ağa (Paşa) (1766), Şahin Mehmed Paşa (10 Z 1143/16 June 1731) and Nişli Mehmed Ağa (2 C 1177/8 December 1763) to the same position.

95 Direct promotions to sadaret kaimmakam-ship such as that of Sarı Mustafa Ağa Paşa (4 C 1168/18 March 1755), Nişli Mehmed Ağa (25 R 1177/2 November 1763), Yeğen Mehmed Ağa Paşa (27 B 1187/14 October 1773). Later promotions to sadaret kaimmakamship are Çelebi Mehmed Ağa Paşa (22 L 1124/22 November 1712), Şahin Mehmed Ağa Paşa, Dibacızâde İbrahim Ağa Paşa. Hasan Paşa was appointed in 1809. Seyyid Halil Ağa was appointed to the same position with the rank of vizier (3 Ra 1225/8 April 1810). İzmirli Halil Ağa also became kaimmakam in the same year (1810). Ağa Hasan Paşa was appointed as the *rikab kaimmakam* on 25 R 1161/24 April 1748.

instance, a considerable number of them (29 ağas) were appointed either as directly or subsequently as the guardian of certain fortress or to a strategically important region or governorship on the condition of providing for the defense of a certain region.

As may be seen in graph 18.4, the rapid dismissals of the previous century continued, the average term of office being around one year (344 days). More than half of the the ağas of this period died without further promotion. Some retired or were dismissed and never able to get a new promotion, while some were murdered during the uprisings, and thus an overwhelming percentage could never attain higher rank. The dismissals and appointments of the janissary ağas become so noticeable that the historians of the last two periods also began to ask questions about it.[96] One particular reason for dismissals were the revolts of the period. In the famous uprising of 1730, Sarrac Kel Mehmed Ağa lost his life.[97] Pehlivan Hüseyin Ağa Paşa, the janissary ağa from 25 Ş 1221/7 November 1806 to 12 Ca 1222/18 July 1807, was not in the capital during the outbreak of the upheaval of 1807, but he was first dismissed, then reinstalled, and finally lost his life during the incidents in the imperial camp which were related to the May 1807 uprising.[98] Not long after this revolt, Vanlı Sarı Mustafa Ağa was killed, this time during the Alemdar Incident (27 N 1223/16 November 1808) due to his refusal to join the rebels.[99] The last case in our list is the

96 Şânîzâde, Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâ'ullah Efendi, *Şânîzâde Târîhi* [*Osmanlı Tarihi* (*1223-1237/1808-1821*), ed. Ziya Yılmazer, 2 vols, Istanbul 2008, II, p. 963: "as was explained before, circumstances of those troublesome days required the frequent reassignment of the janissary aghas, and the dismissal and assignment of Grand Viziers became customary as they turned out to be incompetent …" [ve ahvâl-i dehr-i pür ıztırâb ve 'asr-ı a'şârı tahrîr u tezkâr olunan ikide bir yeniçeri ağalarının tebdîlini icâb etmiş ve teceddüd-i Sadr-ı azamî'de biraz 'azl ü nasb husûsu nümâyiş-i istiklâl ile 'âdet olmuş idüğünden …].

97 Sarrac Kel Mehmed (ağa from 17 Ra 1143/30 September 1730 to 13 R 1143/26 October 1730) was not from the regular hierarchy of the janissary corps. He was an ex-*çorbacı* who later became a saddler at the time of the revolt. He was actually appointed as an ağa by the rebels themselves, and thus was later executed. Vakanüvis Subhi Mehmed Efendi, *Subhi Tarihi: Sami ve Şakir Tarihleri ile Birlikte, İnceleme ve Karşılaştırmalı Metin*, ed. M. Aydıner, Istanbul 2007, p. 28; Faik Reşit Unat (ed.), *1730 Patrona İhtilali Hakkında Bir Eser: Abdi Tarihi*, Ankara 2014, pp. 48, 75-77.

98 For more details on the mutiny in the army and his death, see Aysel Yıldız, *Vaka-yı Selimiyye or the Selimiyye Incident: A Study of the May 1807 Uprising*, Ph.d. thesis (Sabancı University, 2008), pp. 473-78.

99 Câbî Ömer Efendi, *Câbî Tarihi,* (*Tarih-i Sultan Selim-i Salis ve Mahmud-ı Sani*)*: Tahlil ve Tenkidli Metin*, ed. Mehmet Ali Beyhan, 2 vols. Ankara 2003, I, p. 270-72; *Saray Günlüğü*, p. 250. Vanlı Sarı Mustafa Ağa served as the ağa from 2 B 1223/24 August 1808 to 27 N 1223/16 November 1808.

murder of Mehmed Şerif Ağa. Though a very minor incident in comparison to the others, he was murdered by his own soldiers who were protesting against the capture and imprisonment of three janissary masters.[100] If they were not murdered by rebels, the janissary ağas were among the first statesmen to be punished at times of political unrest, especially if they had been unable to prevent unruly acts by their soldiers. The dismissals of Çelebi Areç Yusuf Paşa, Ballı Mehmed Ağa, Darbune Ebubekir Ağa, Muhsinzâde Abdullah Paşa, Kelleci Mustafa Ağa, Mehmed Emin Ağa, Mehmed Ağa, Birinci Ali Ağa and Hasan Ağa were due to this reason. Kelleci Osman Ağa was dismissed due to a mutiny by the janissaries in the imperial camp in Vidin in 1788. The soldiers demanded immediate payment of salaries, and attacked and wounded Osman Ağa who was replaced by Mehmed Emin Ağa (12 L 1202/16 July 1788).[101] This was a strategy which also suggests the helplessness of the imperial court, which was unable to check the janissaries, and thus they held the janissary ağas responsible. Hasan Ağa was dismissed due to the Baba Haydar incident.[102] On the other hand, Ruscuklu Ağa Hüseyin Paşa was dismissed in order to protect him from threats by the janissaries (17 R 1239/21 December 1823).[103] Sometimes the pressure of the janissaries was so strong that the janissary ağas were dismissed

100 Şânîzâde, I, pp. 683-85.

101 Çelebi Areç Yusuf Paşa was dismissed on 2 L 1106/16 May 1695 due to his inability to punish bandits (*eşkıya*), Mehmet Topal, Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Nusretname: Tahlil ve Metin, 1106/1133-1695/1711*, unpublished Ph.D thesis (Marmara University, 2001), p. 31. Muhsinzâde Abdullah Paşa was dismissed from his second tenure in the office due to his inability to supress an uprising in 1731 (23 N 1143/1 April 1731), Subhi, p. 82. Dismissal of Kelleci Mustafa Ağa was related due to a minor incident in 1748, but also due to the oppression of his own servants (25 Ra 1161/25 March 1748), Şemdanizâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi, *Mirü't-Tevarih*, ed. M. Aktepe, 2 vols. Istanbul 1976, I, p. 143. Kelleci Osman Ağa dismissal was due to a mutiny of the janissaries to get their salaries (12 L 1202/16 July 1788), Ü. Filiz Bayram, *Enverî Tarihi, Üçüncü Cilt* (*Metin ve Değerlendirme*), unpublished Ph.d. thesis (Istanbul University 2014), III, p. 428 Mehmed Emin Ağa was dismissed on the grounds that he was unable to check the janissaries (22 M 1203/23 October 1788), BOA, HAT 1451/5 (24 M 1203/25 October 1788), Enverî, III, p. 491; Mehmed Ağa was dismissed on 1 S 1224/18 March 1809, Şânîzâde I, p. 199. Birinci Ali Ağa dismissed on 26 Z 1239/22 August 1824 for not being able to supress mutiny, Esad, p. 338. Finally Hasan Ağa resigned to his unability to check the janissaries (Esad, p. 454).

102 The janissaries had protested against the exile of a sheik from Persia called Baba Haydar. Esad, pp. 130-32. For more details see Yıldız, *The Selimiyye Incident*, pp. 715-17.

103 BOA, C. AS. 58/2737 (14 C 1238/26 February 1823). Since the real intention of center was to protect him from the anger of the janissaries, the ağa was immediately appointed as the governor of Hüdavendigar on the condition of providing the security of the Straits. Esad, p. 226.

at their request, as in the case of Kuyucu Süleyman Ağa Paşa.[104] On the other hand, Ballı Mehmed Ağa was dismissed (6 Z 1119/28 February 1708) due to an accusation that he was unaware of a conspiracy to usurp the throne.[105] There is also another group of ağas who were dismissed with the accusation of *tekasül* (around 20 ağas). *Tekasül* is a very general and vague expression which signifies that someone was not doing his job properly; further details are unfortunately missing.

Though not very frequent, one of the causes of dismissal for the janissary ağas was fires in the capital city. Although fires may seem to be unconnected to the duties of the ağas, in fact they were considered responsible for order in the city, and as a part of this they acted as firefighters. An ağa was expected to make night inspections and provide for order during extraordinary circumstances, and had the right to arrest some culprits and report others to the grand vizier.[106] Failure meant falling from disgrace. There were some ağas who were dismissed after a great fire or after frequent fires in the city, or sometimes due to their failure to speedily extinguish it. Among the ağas who were dismissed due to fires are Cafer Ağa (dismissed on B 977/December 1569), Kelleci Mustafa Ağa (23 Ca 1163/30 April 1750), Macar Hasan Ağa (21 Ş 1165/4 July 1752), Mehmed Said Ağa (28 M 1207/15 September 1792), all either due to the frequency of fires during their tenure or their inability to extinguish them. Bosnalı Osman Ağa died while trying to extinguish a fire.[107]

Another important category of dismissals for janissary ağas is their own involvement in illegal acts, especially bribery and embezzlement of money. Koca Kara Mustafa Ağa was dismissed on 28 S 1125/26 March 1713 due to bribery, having derived considerable money from the dignitaries of the janissary army. Fındıkzâde Ahmed Ağa was accused, and then dismissed, on the grounds of embezzling the salaries of the soldiers, while Tokadlı Mustafa Ağa was accused of receiving illegal payments from soldiers and officers. Vefalı Ömer Ağa was dismissed for being oppressive, but also due to his greed, particularly in embezzling the *postal baha* (shoes fee) of the soldiers.[108]

104 Enverî, I, pp. 188-89; 405-6.

105 Silahdar, *Nusretname*, pp. 692-93.

106 *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, II, p. 93.

107 Çerçi, *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, 55, İzzi Süleyman, *Tarih-i İzzi*, Istanbul 1181/1768, pp. 484-85, Şemdanizâde, I, pp. 155, 163; Kemal Beydilli, "Evreka, Evraka veya Errare Humanum Est" İlmi Araştırmalar 9 (2000), pp. 48, 52.

108 Raşid, II, p. 877; Silahdar, *Nusretname*, p. 904; Beydilli, "Evreka," p. 49; *Ahmed Vasıf Efendi, Mehâsinü'l-Âsâr ve Hakaikü'l-Âhbâr*, H. Sarıkaya, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Marmara University 2013), pp. 447-48.

So far we have dealt mostly with janissary careers and networks; but since we are dealing with a military group we should dwell a little on their military side. Unfortunately, there is not enough information available to make clear-cut conclusions in this regard. Yet we can affirm that several of them died during wars (Sücaaddin Ağa, Mustafa Ağa, Mustafa Ağa, Çikoğlu Mehmed Ağa, Deli Baltazâde Mahmud Ağa, Abdullah Ağa Paşa, Yazıcı Mehmed Said Ağa). In comparison to the total number, however, this is a rather minor figure. Again, if we concentrate on the dismissals due to warfare, it appears to be a negligible ratio if we take the total number of ağas into consideration. Hüsrev Ağa (Paşa) was dismissed (1626) due to the long siege of Baghdad, while Kürd Hasan Ağa was not helpful in the seizure of the fortresses (1 N 1127/31 August 1715). Bayraktar Zileli Hüseyin Ağa was dismissed (1 C 1129/13 May 1717) and banished to Bihke due to his failures in the campaign, and Ermeni Mehmed Ağa was dismissed in a similar way (29 M 1130/2 January 1718) having failed in the capture of Belgrade. Kelleci Osman Ağa was dismissed again due to his failure in war as well as a mutiny by the janissaries over payment of their salaries. Boşnak Bektaşi Süleyman (23 M 1206/22 September 1791) and Arabzâde Seyyid Ahmed Ağa (4 Za 1206/24 June 1792) were dismissed for similar reasons. Karahasanzâde Mustafa Ağa was dismissed (17 C 1089/6 August 1678) due to his ignorance of entrenchement ("*metris bilmediğinden*"), which also means that he was ignorant of war tactics. Hoca Ali Ağa was executed due to his insistence on moving to Edirne to pass the winter (9 C 1068/14 March 1658). One interesting case is that of Harami/Hırami Ali Ağa (1595): he was dismissed since he did not attend the imperial council, having been preoccupied with making preparations for a coming campaign.[109]

Final Observations

This paper has aimed provide an overview of the careers of the commanders of an elite military organization, the janissary corps; it does not go so far as to claim to have illuminated every aspect of the promotion and command structures of this important army. Studying the janissary ağas purely from the

109 Halil İnalcık, "Hüsrev Paşa," DİA, p. 37; Raşid, II, pp. 944, 1082; *Nusretname*, p. 873; Behceti Seyyid İbrahim Efendi, *Tarih-i Sülale-i Köprülü* (*Transkripsiyon ve Tahlil*), M.F. Gökçek unpublished M.A. thesis (Marmara University 2006), p. 62; Mehmed Sadık Zaimzâde, *Vaka-yı Hamidiye: Tenkidli Transkripsiyon*, M. Öge, unpublished MA thesis (Balıkesir University 2001), pp. 88-89; Ahmed Vasıf Efendi, *Tarih-i Vasıf*, Istanbul Üniversitesi TY 5978,fl. 107b; Beydilli, "Evreka," p. 47; Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, p. 705; Selânikî, II, p. 486.

perspective of career and promotion patterns is insufficient to provide a deep understanding of the implications of officership: their social, political and economic networks, their connections, and their powers deserve to be studied in a more comprehensive manner. More research on individual commanders – and, more importantly, future comparative studies – will be required for the commanders of the other Ottoman military units. When we take into consideration the limited research in Ottoman studies on this topic, such a step seems inevitable if we are to engage in meaningful comparison with other examples from across the globe. I am already undertaking a project of comparative analysis of Ottoman command of different units, and hopefully global comparisons will follow.

Still, a very interesting picture emerges in this study. While the janissary army on the whole began to lose its strictly military nature and turn into a para-military group, its rank-and-file gradually became more professional and institutionalized, if not in a fully modern sense. Initially, it was the *devşirme* system which provided a ready pool for the appointments to the janissary officers, but since it was not exclusive to the military establishment, janissary ağa-ship was usually considered to be a stage in one's career. These figures were outcasts in society and their source of power was not rooted in birth but drawn from service to the court. They were trained for the needs of the imperial household. During the mid-seventeenth century, the monopoly of the palace was shaken, though never completely broken, and the role of officership became more established, maturing during the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Together with the higher degree of institutionalization, the corps' authority structure was firmly established, arranging promotions and dismissals according to its own institutional principles.

Yet these developments still do not demonstrate the full professionalization of the janissary army. In fact, the rise of professional officer corps is a product of nineteenth-century Western countries,[110] and in the Ottoman case it came much later. Due to his loss of control over the janissary corps, Mahmud II had long decided to rid himself of this traditional military system. The cause was not related to the commanders but to the soldiery; and, indeed, Mahmud achieved the abolition and destruction of the janissary army in collaboration with the janissary ağa, Mehmed Celaleddin. Yet the abolition of the janissary corps could not immediately bring professionalism to the Ottoman military system, and the new and modern corps of Mahmud II still lacked a well-established principle of seniority and a disciplined training system, and was stricken

110 Huntington, *Soldier and State*, pp. 30-58.

with factionalism. Interestingly, the new attempt at producing army had been the subject of experiments by the courtiers of the imperial household.[111]

From another perspective, the opportunities of the janissary ağas to reach higher administrative positions and decision-making roles also decreased sharply. A purely military corps turned into a traditional status group in the Weberian sense, gaining partial freedom from the sultans' patrimonial rule. The janissary army evolved from a small units of bodyguards of the sultan to the backbone of the Ottoman infantry units, and its rank and promotion system also evolved in the same direction. As we have tried to assess by following the traces of the career and promotion patterns of the janissary ağas, the degree of control by the palace over the janissary corps is reflected in their recruitment patterns, which became loosened but always remained under the strict control of the palace and the bureaucracy, due to the potential of the janissaries and their commanders to act as a strong pressure group. Probably for the same reason, the janissary ağas could never form a closed status group akin to the religious establishment (*ulema*) of the eighteenth century, the reason for which may be found in their frequent appointments and dismissals during the seventeenth and subsequent centuries.

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111 Avigdor Levy, "The Officer Corps in Sultan Mahmud II's New Ottoman Army, 1826-39," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2 (January 1971), pp. 21-39.

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